

Be Ambitious

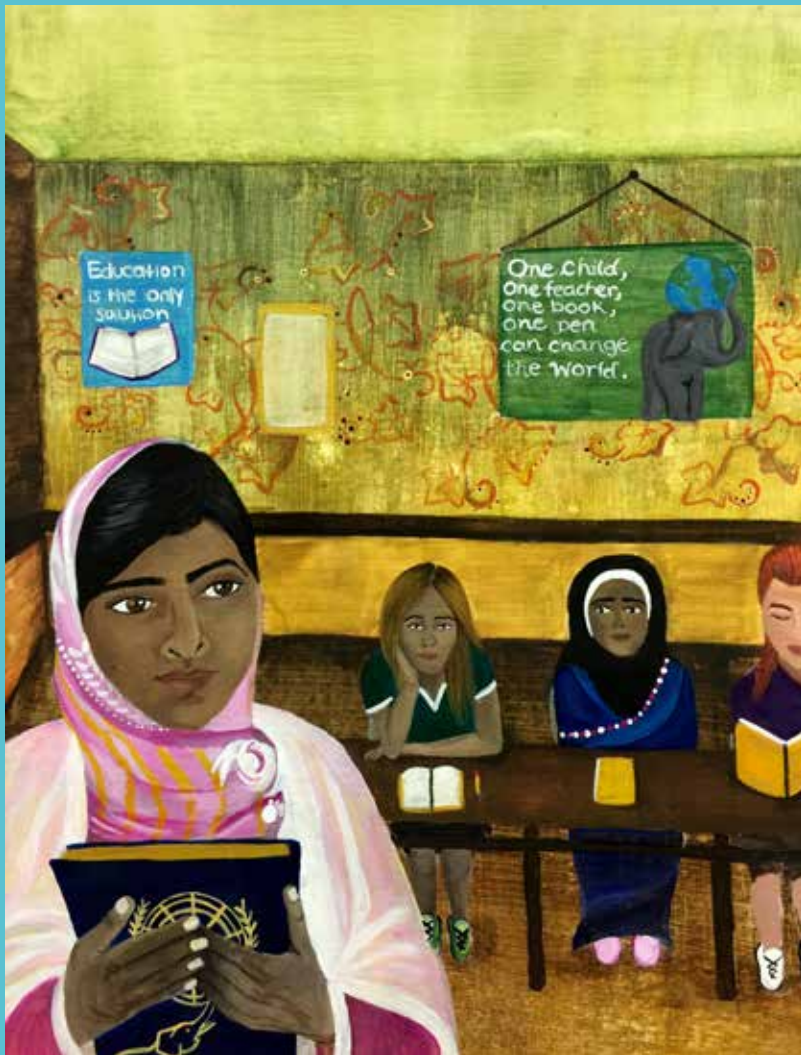
Creative Writing & Visual
Arts Anthology 2016



Be Ambitious

Cover artwork

Charlotte, 18, North Broward Preparatory School



Judge's thoughts: I have chosen this piece by Charlotte as it really spoke to me, for both its conceptual and technical brilliance. The style of work reminds me of artwork I see published in books now, with its sophisticated use of depth and brushwork. The message that Malala sends is inspiring and profound, and I feel this image captures that.

To read the entry that inspired Charlotte's winning Artwork, turn to page 87



Be Ambitious

Creative Writing & Visual Arts Anthology 2016

This year the Global Campus creative writing competition challenged our students to produce a piece of any style or genre around our educational philosophy of being ambitious. A parallel competition encouraged budding artists to create a work of art in any medium which represented one of the written entries selected for publication.

Over 4,500 students from 33 schools took up the challenge.

We are immensely grateful to our panel of judges – authors Kevin Crossley-Holland, Rhiannon Lassiter and Barry Hutchison and illustrator Phillippa Walter. They have selected a Judge's Choice and several Highly Commended pieces in each category. To be selected for inclusion in this Anthology is a considerable achievement; our student authors and artists should be very proud.

Contents

Foreword	Mark Orrow-Whiting	04
Visual Arts Judge	Phillippa Walter	05
Primary Judge	Kevin Crossley-Holland	06
Lower Secondary Judge	Barry Hutchison	07
Upper Secondary Judge	Rhiannon Lassiter	08

Primary	Written by	Artwork by	Page
Anskia's Dream	Olivia	Caterina	12/13
Nothing to do but watch	Amna	Shalini	14/15
Mario Vargas Llosa	Almudena	Mario	16/17
Ambition	James	Tina	18/19
Life in the Sky	Saranya	Qin	20/21
The 2 sides	Amelie	Max	22/23
Onwards and Upwards	Alexander	Nicolas	24/25
Ambition is...	Astrid	Aimee, Jasmine, Jessica, Seamchang and Mona	26
Ambition	Frederic	Ivan	27
Aquatic Adele	Adele	Alex	28/29
The FOBISIA Champ	Gabriella	Oliver	30/31
Rachel Carson's Ambition and Contribution to the World	Hannah	Angelina	32
Reach High	Grace and Keira	Ilinca	33

Primary	Written by	Artwork by	Page
President Worries	James	Isabella	34/35
Learning to Fly	Elena	Abdulla	36/37
The Fate of Nogard	Katherine	JiaHui	38/39
A Girl and a Horse	Jaymie	Siya	40/41
Game. Set. Match.	Kriti	Duc	42/43
Discover	Madele	Ammenah	44/45
Paintings	Maria	Beth	46/47
The Thirteenth Games	Nathanial	Trung	48/49
Be The Best You Can	Olivia	Seoyun (artist) and Shayne (photographer)	50
The Strokes for Ambition	Mhairi	Calvin (artist) and Shayne (photographer)	51
The Legendary Mountaineer, Sir Edmund Hillary	Richard	Enzo	52/53
Chicho Fresco	Sofia	Giana	54/55
Woke Up	Sasa	Aditya	56/57
Henry or Henrietta?	Sonny	June	58/59
Dr Ambitious	Shonchari	Jeppe	60/61
Life is a Story	Toby	David	62/63
Leonardo Da Vinci – Genius!	Yallini	Vivan	64/65
Free to Flare	Zephyr	Nathan	66/67

<i>Lower Secondary</i>	Written by	Artwork by	Page
The Ambitious Beetle	<i>Lucas</i>	<i>Alexandre</i>	70/71
What is Ambition?	<i>Beatrice</i>	<i>Bianca</i>	72/73
Kamal	<i>Christopher</i>	<i>Omnia</i>	74/75
Patch-work	<i>Courtney</i>	<i>Pavel</i>	76/77
Pages Turned	<i>Naomi</i>	<i>Larissa</i>	78/79
Malala of Mingora	<i>Anna</i>	<i>Charlotte</i>	80/81
The Sun	<i>Alba</i>	<i>Maia</i>	82/83
Realise Real Eyes	<i>Bella</i>	<i>Delia</i>	84
The Fear of Simplicity	<i>Akhila</i>	<i>Sae</i>	85
Medical Mayhem	<i>Cara</i>	<i>Karla</i>	86/87
Thank You Ziauddin	<i>Jakub</i>	<i>Catalina</i>	88/89
The Story About The Theme	<i>Jia</i>	<i>Khyrz</i>	90/91
Tony's Lift Off	<i>John</i>	<i>Jakub</i>	92/93
Toni Kurz	<i>Josef</i>	<i>Amir</i>	94/95
A Dream Becoming True	<i>Louis</i>	<i>Serena</i>	96/97
The Ant	<i>Nukaiya</i>	<i>Edward</i>	98/99
What if?	<i>Selina</i>	<i>Ana</i>	100/101
Be Ambitious	<i>Simon</i>	<i>Jie</i>	102/103
Eyes are of the Ember Kind	<i>Nicole</i>	<i>Viktoria</i>	104/105
A Lack of Imagination	<i>Kaat</i>	<i>Martin</i>	106/107

<i>Upper Secondary</i>	Written by	Artwork by	Page
Orange	<i>Laurent</i>	<i>Yahya</i>	110/111
Feminism	<i>Mila</i>	<i>Fatimah</i>	112/113
Coin	<i>Patricha</i>	<i>Junyan</i>	114/115
Don't Be Ambitious	<i>Erik</i>	<i>Jiahao</i>	116/117
Hopeful	<i>Emilie</i>	<i>Francesca</i>	118/119
The Truth About Ambition	<i>Ryan</i>	<i>Alessandra</i>	120/121
Wasp Ambitious	<i>William</i>	<i>Amanda</i>	122/123
Be Ambitious	<i>Pauline</i>	<i>Ina</i>	124/125
Learning to Surf	<i>Sophie</i>	<i>Fan</i>	126/127
The Power of Ambition	<i>Nadine</i>	<i>Batti</i>	128/129
Where are we now?	<i>Charlotte</i>	<i>Jeongmook</i>	130/131
Odette	<i>Emilia</i>	<i>Grace</i>	132/133
The Flight of the Flora	<i>Danyal</i>	<i>Alicia</i>	134/135
Distress	<i>Benjamin</i>	<i>Yukiha</i>	136/137
Concupiscence	<i>Carlee</i>	<i>Huzair</i>	138/139

Foreword | Mark Orrow-Whiting



It is with great pleasure that I introduce this year's Creative Writing Competition Anthology. At Nord Anglia Education we are always made extremely proud by the creative efforts of our students in this competition, and the pieces in this year's edition are no exception.

The work you will find in this anthology reacts to the theme 'Be Ambitious,' a phrase which is at the heart of the Nord Anglia identity. Just as central staff and teachers are ambitious for the development of our schools, we wanted our students to reflect on how they could channel their creativity and determination to realise their own personal ambitions. The Creative Writing Competition was an exciting opportunity to encourage ambitious work, and the students did not disappoint. An outstanding 4500 students from 33 schools took part in the competition. This was a record for the competition, and a statement of true ambition from our students.

Past competitions asked for the submission of short stories on a specific theme. In 2015, however, we broadened the scope of the competition, allowing our students to explore a much larger range of forms and genres. This has resulted in an anthology which encompasses short fiction, biographical pieces, news articles and poetry, alongside vivid and thought-provoking illustrations which were provided by participants in the Visual Arts Competition.

Each judge took responsibility for selecting the winning entrants for different age-groups, all of whom are featured in this anthology. As a panel they expressed their delight and surprise at the quality and diversity of the entries. More of their thoughts can be read in the pages of this book. The presence and feedback of such successful authors was no doubt a powerful incentive for the students to get involved.

All that is left to say is congratulations to all the students involved. As ever it was an inspirational experience to read so many high-quality pieces of writing, and to see such vibrant artwork.

Mark Orrow-Whiting
Director of Curriculum & Student Performance

Visual Arts Judge | Phillippa Walter



Phillippa Walter is an artist from Wales, United Kingdom. After studying art for ten years she graduated from Cardiff Metropolitan University with a Bachelors degree in Artwork. After graduating she followed her childhood dream of painting on set for television and theatre, and has worked for some very eccentric clients. With the help of her mentor, M. King, she qualified in outdoor education, and now spends her days teaching people to paddle and climb, before painting beautiful pictures of the sea in the evening.

Phillippa says that her greatest achievement was training to become a mountain leader and she loves to spend her winter days getting to the top of snowy mountains.

Phillippa has worked with us at the Global Campus before, as the creator of our fabulous Mini Adventures map, so we were very excited to have her on board to judge our Visual Arts competition.

Judge's thoughts: There were many excellent entries submitted to this competition, and picking one out of all of them was a very difficult job indeed!

The broad range of talent that I have seen whilst looking through these entries has been a wonderful and inspiring experience.

I would like to add, even though I could only choose a few works this time, it by no means indicates any lack of talent from the other participants' entries; I loved all of them. I would like you all to keep on experimenting, learning, creating; you never know, you could be the next Jackson Pollock or Picasso.

Phillippa Walter
Illustrator

Primary Judge | Kevin Crossley-Holland



This year we are incredibly lucky to have Kevin Crossley-Holland as judge for the Primary category. Kevin won the coveted Carnegie Medal (for his ghost-story *Storm*) and the Guardian Children's Fiction Award for *The Seeing Stone*. His Arthur trilogy has sold over 2 million copies and been translated into

25 languages, and his most recent book is *Heartsong*, a spellbinding tale about the healing power of music, illustrated by the magical Jane Ray. Also well known as a poet and translator from Anglo-Saxon, Kevin visits many schools at home and abroad, and is President of the School Library Association. His wife Linda comes from Minnesota (USA), and he has four children and four grandchildren. You might even have met Kevin in your school!

Learn more about Kevin Crossley-Holland by visiting his website: www.kevincrossley-holland.com

Judge's thoughts: *The choice of AMBITION as this year's theme is a fine one. It looks forward, it asks each of us what we can make of our lives, and it can be written about and illustrated by everyone involved in this anthology.*

Reading these short stories, poems and biographical sketches, I was often stopped in my tracks by the way in which their authors did not so much write to make a point as discover something in the act of writing them. The need to persist despite people not understanding or wanting to understand; the fleeting nature of popularity; the way we must temper ambition with time and respect for others. Fierce rivalry and 'running faster than I have ever run before, with anger in a strange way helping me'. "Dream big. Think outside the box."

I'm putting down my pen, thinking that our battered world, so soon to be in the hands of these Nord Anglia children, is at least in safe hands: unillusioned, realistic, compassionate, often witty, resilient, dreaming and aiming high.

Kevin Crossley-Holland
Author

Lower Secondary Judge | Barry Hutchison



Barry Hutchison is an award-winning author, screenwriter and writer of comics. Living halfway up a mountain in the Highlands of Scotland, Barry spends his days making up scary stories, useless heroes, and hilarious monsters. He first realised he wanted to write books from the age of 9, and since his first book was

published in 2010, has written over 70 books for children. Barry also writes for comics like the *Beano*, *Angry Birds* and *Adventure Time*, and is currently developing an animated comedy series.

You can visit Barry's website to see his latest work, or follow him on Twitter:

www.barryhutchison.com

[@barryhutchison](https://twitter.com/barryhutchison)

Judge's thoughts: *Over the past five years I've delivered hundreds of writing workshops, and the standard of writing demonstrated in the entries for this competition is some of the highest I've seen for pupils of this age group, and better than many older groups, too. Imagination and creative flair leapt off the page of every entry, and I lay awake long into the night trying to decide which entry would be the winner. While there could only be one winner, there are no losers here, and if they chose to, I think any one of the entrants could go on to have a writing career one day. Congratulations to everyone who took part, and keep up the good work.*

Barry Hutchison
Author

Upper Secondary Judge | Rhiannon Lassiter



Rhiannon Lassiter is an author of science fiction, fantasy, contemporary, magical realism and psychological horror and thriller novels for juniors, teenagers and young adults. She was born in 1977 and is the eldest daughter of award-winning children's author Mary Hoffman.

Rhiannon's first novel, *Hex*, was accepted for publication when she was nineteen years old. She completed the book and a sequel while at university reading English Literature at Corpus Christi College, Oxford. *Hex* was published in more than ten countries and widely reviewed. Philip Pullman described it as having "considerable narrative authority and a real flair for atmosphere".

Rhiannon has published eleven further novels, a non-fiction book about the supernatural and co-edited an anti-war anthology of poetry and prose: *Lines in the Sand*. Her psychological horror novel *Bad Blood*, was nominated for six awards: including the Guardian Prize and the BookTrust Prize.

Rhiannon was a judge for the Arthur C. Clarke award in 2009 and 2010.

Her favourite authors include Ursula LeGuin, Margaret Mahy and Octavia Butler. Her own novels explore themes of identity, change and becoming.

Rhiannon lives and works in Oxford, United Kingdom. Her ambition is to be the first writer-in-residence on the Moon! You can visit Rhiannon's website to learn more about her work: www.rhiannonlassiter.com

Judge's thoughts: *Thank you for the opportunity to judge this category. The writing was incredibly strong and every piece had some really great elements. It made it very hard to select a winner.*

I've chosen one winner and four honourable mentions. These pieces all stood out for different reasons but what they had in common was how the authors had engaged with the concept and tried to find their own individual twist on it. Everyone who entered should be proud of their work and keep writing. A lot of these pieces I wanted to be longer or to give something more. That's a great sign!

Rhiannon Lassiter
Author

"I was often stopped in my tracks by the way in which [the authors] did not so much write to make a point as discover something in the act of writing them."

Kevin Crossley-Holland
Primary Judge and Author

"...the standard of writing demonstrated in the entries for this competition is some of the highest I've seen for pupils of this age group..."

Barry Hutchison
Lower Secondary Judge and Author

"The writing was incredibly strong and every piece had some really great elements. It made it very hard to select a winner."

Rhiannon Lassiter
Upper Secondary Judge and Author

Primary



Anskia's Dream

Olivia, 11, St Andrews International School Bangkok

My name is Anskia and my dream is to become a famous artist. My mother was Venezuelan, my father's family came from Peru and Brazil. He abandoned us when I was two, leaving my mother to raise my brother and I. They were both tragically killed five years later in a bomb attack. My grandmother took me in and we moved to Chile, where we settled into a small seaside town.

At first I was intimidated by her, but I grew to absolutely adore her. The weeks passed and then one day she called to me from the living room. I stopped painting and rushed down the stairs. Dark clouds formed and the patter of drizzle splashed the window panes. She sat comfortably in a mammoth leather armchair near a warm fire that looked out over the cliffs. Her face was a bag of wrinkles with sleek white hair tied in a bun.

"Now sit down," she commanded.

I sat in obedience and silence. Was there a problem I wondered? Is she ill? At this age that would be a big problem!?

"I'm going to tell you a story" she smiled.

"Now, there once was a girl who was the same age as you called Tarsilla Do Amaral. She was born in Capivari; a countryside town in Brazil. She was from a poor farming community that had become quite wealthy by growing

coffee. During that time girls your age were discouraged from having a proper education, but Tarsilla's family was the exception."

The salty breeze gushed through the open window, chilling the room. I shot up and ran to close it.

"Now if you go make us both a cup of Coco" she whispered with a grin, "I'll set up the fire!"

As we went about our tasks, my grandmother continued.

"She got caught in many tough times you know, she was criticised for going to school and bullied. When Tarsilla was a teenager she travelled to Spain with her parents. Her artistic talents impressed the local art world, especially the copies she made of paintings in the school library. She decided that her dream was to become an artist."

"There you go." I murmured as I passed her cup of steaming Coco.

"Thank you" she sighed, taking a sip of the frothy liquid before continuing.

"Tarsilla started working harder and harder towards her goal, ignoring the criticism she faced for being a female artist. She became so successful that she started traveling through France and Spain with exhibitions of her work. Today she is one of Brazil's most renowned modern artists."

"Where is she now?" I asked.

"Retired!" came the blunt reply. It was then that the penny dropped.

"Grandma" I asked suspiciously "What's your last name?"

"Do Amaral." She grinned. "Tarsilla Do Amaral!!"

A bullet of excitement hit me. I will never forget this story as from then it became my inspiration, my own ambition, my dream.

Judge's thoughts: Here's a born storyteller. How quickly and vividly she describes this warm Chile living room overlooking the sea. How naturally grandmother talks about her childhood. And how skilfully we to-and-fro between direct action and her story within a story. Not only this. Without over-emphasis, Anskia's Dream makes serious points about the difficulties sometimes faced by female artists, and the way in which it is often another person – maybe one already known to us, maybe one in our own family – who can inspire us to discover and follow our own ambition.

Caterina, 8, The British School of Beijing, Sanlitun



Judge's thoughts: *I have chosen Anskia's Dream by Caterina as I relished its individuality, I really like the block colours and playfulness that Caterina has opted to express. This is something so different and in being so, she has created a piece of artwork that I absolutely adore.*

Nothing to do but watch

Amna, 11, Compass International School Doha, Madinat Khalifa

Once there was a small wooden cabin, in a small peaceful town in south Alaska. In that cabin lived a little girl, Rose, and her brother, Oliver. Rose had always dreamed to skate on ice like her brother. Every day she would watch him glide through the cold but glistening ice. He would skate round pillars, and she would watch. He would skate on one leg, and she would watch. He would skate while listening to music, and she would watch. She never had anything to do but watch.

One day when Rose was watching her brother, she caught something at the corner of her eye. It was a pair of skating shoes, exactly her size. That was when her head lit up. After carefully putting them on, worried that she would trip, she slowly walked into the ice rink. Rose clung onto the side as hard as she could and started to skate very slowly. After getting confident, she let go of the side and tried there. The ice was too slippery – it was much harder than she could bear – and with one step she slipped onto her back.

For days she suffered with a sore back. Rose sat on the chair and switched on her T.V. On it, came the sports channel. It was streaming the local figure skating team. Rose watched as one of them swiftly swirled while the other was twisting and twirling. She put up a smile, but from deep inside she knew that she could never skate as beautifully as they could.

The following day when she went to watch her brother she didn't dare to look at him skate. She just stared, sulking at her shoes but was interrupted by a tap at her shoulders. It was Oliver. He gave her a tissue to wipe her face and forced her into the ice rink, this time, watching her really carefully making sure she didn't slip. With her brother's help, Rose managed to take a few steps into the ice but then he zoomed to the other side. She stood there trembling, empty-minded, until a voice inside her said "Rose Hemlock! Don't give up, it's your dream. Get up and skate!" She built up the courage to skate and now falling was only the best injury. Closing her eyes she took a deep breath, and tried again, only this time she was actually doing it. She was twisting and twirling just like the figure skaters. Now she was skating just like her brother.

Once there was a small wooden cabin, in a small peaceful town in south Alaska. In that cabin there was a girl who always lived her dream, ice skating.

Judge's thoughts: To be sure, spelling and punctuation matter, and so do structure and coherence, but they count for nothing without imagination. The combination of beautiful, precise details and Rose's longing, all in brief sentences, invite us to come to care for her and hope so much that she'll succeed.

Shalini, 10, The British International School Bratislava



Mario Vargas Llosa

Almudena, 9, International College Spain

Born the 28 of March, 1936 in Arequipa, Peru, Mario Vargas Llosa had a purpose. He set his goal of being a writer since he was young. That was strange because in Peru not many people read or became a great writer. He often thought of the great writers that everyone talked about. He was tempted many times to write a letter to them. Several times, he was let down and thought he would never be one. But until he won the Nobel Prize, there is a lot of history.

His full name is Jorge Mario Pedro Vargas Llosa. His dad abandoned Mario and his mom when Mario was about 3. Mario and his mom moved to Mario's grandparent's house. But even though Mario had no dad at that moment, he didn't let himself down. Eventually, Mario found a way to "escape" from all that pain: READING.

He realized it was up to him to choose to be happy or not. One day, Mario and his mom were walking when Mario's mom asked him, "You know, right?" Mario responded, "Know what?", "Your dad is alive", she said. "Yes, yes I knew." But Mario didn't know. All his maternal family had always made him believe his dad was dead. Mario met his dad when he was ten. His parents re-established their relationship and lived in Magdalena del Mar, a middle class Lima suburb, during Mario's teenage years. Mario was still following his dream of being a writer, but was stopped by his dad. His dad had other plans for him. He thought literature was immature and so he sent Mario to Military School. He got the inspiration to write, some years later, a great book called "*The time of the Hero*" (*La Ciudad y los*

Perros), based on his experience in 1st grade of Military School (8th grade). Before Mario's graduation, he began working as a journalist for a local newspaper and released the theatrical performance of his 1st dramatic work, *La Huida del Inca*.

Vargas Llosa enrolled in Lima's National University of San Marcos to study Law and Literature. He married Julia Urquidi, his maternal uncle's sister at the age of 19; Julia was 10 years older. Vargas Llosa began his writer career in 1957 with the publication of his first short stories, "*The Leaders*" (*Los Jefes*) and "*The Grandfather*" (*El abuelo*). While working for two Peruvian newspapers, he received a scholarship to study at the Complutense University of Madrid in Spain. In 1960, after his scholarship in Madrid ended, Vargas Llosa moved to France. Due to Mario and Julia's unexpected difficult situation, the couple decided to remain in Paris where Vargas Llosa began to write his most recognized books. Their marriage lasted only a few more years, and ended in 1964. A year later, Mario married his cousin, Patricia Llosa, with whom he stayed for 50 years and had three children.

He didn't give up even though he had no dad, or was forced to go to Military School or when he was poor in Paris. That is being AMBITIOUS.

Judge's thoughts: Informative, clearly argued and succinct, this is a super biographical sketch. It contains a wonderful exchange between Mario and his family, more than one false start, and the greatest of truths: "He (Mario) realised it was up to him to choose to be happy or not." And like the best articles, it drives the reader back to the subject, and makes me want to read more work by Llosa.

Mario, 11, The British International School Bratislava





Ambition

James, 10, Nord Anglia International School New York

I wonder, wonder
What I'll make of me...

AMBITION is what I need
to get from A to Z

Aspiring actor
Busy bee keeper
Climbing climber
Determined doctor
Energetic engineer...

Famous forger
Great grape grower
Hopeful hero
Inspirational ice skater
Jostling jogger

Keen kindergarten teacher
Longing librarian
Motivated mad scientist
Networking nerd
Objective osteopath

Powerful painter
Questioning quality control inspector
Rockin' rock n roll star
Successful scholar
Targeting tree surgeon...
Upstart upholsterer
Vaulting vampire slayer
X-citing xylophone player
Yearning yogi or ...
Zealous zookeeper

I wonder, wonder what I'll make of me...
For now though
I think I'll just be...
an AMBITION pro!

Judge's thoughts: So many of these imaginative, alliterative pairs are right on the nail and witty. Try B and K and Q – and the whole is greater than the sum of the parts. But of course the best joke is saved up until last, and it's a very clever one, hammered home by rhyme.

Tina, 17, North Broward Preparatory School



Life in the Sky

Saranya, 10, La Côte International School Aubonne

Cinnamon raced through the marsh grass, chasing her prey. Today it was a pigeon that had hurt its wing. She ran on, following the rustling noises that the pigeon made. Suddenly, she tripped and fell, beak first onto a hard patch in the marsh, wings splayed. She looked around, confused. Muttering, she raised herself to her feet and spotted, just a few hops away, the pigeon, struggling to fly, but not getting far. She hopped over and finished it with one bite, lifted the dead pigeon onto her back, and started the long walk home.

As she hopped through the flap to her nest, a deep voice said, “Hello, Cinnamon”. It was her father, Eaglewing. He was basically everything she couldn’t be. Apart from ground-hunting. She really excelled at that. “Hi, Dad” she muttered, before collapsing onto her makeshift bed, and drifting off to sleep

Sunlight filtered through the leaves covering the nest, convincing Cinnamon to open her sleep encrusted eyes, and causing her to moan a faint “Oh no, school”. She got up, hurriedly smoothing out her feathers in an attempt to look civilized before she went down for breakfast. After a short meal of sparrow, Cinnamon started the short walk to school.

Most inhabitants of Redfeather town would fly to where they had to go, but Cinnamon couldn’t.

She had two missing tail feathers that never grew back after a vicious fox attack that nearly cost her life. She walked on, brooding, and almost ran into the school gates.

She went in, dreading what Tina Claws, the school bully, would have to say. She bumped into something feathery and soft.

A shadow ring encircled her. She knew this feeling all too well. “Hey, freak. Why don’t ya fly here, huh? Probably cos you’re just a weak hatchling, heh?” Tina stood menacingly over her, owl-like. Cinnamon sighed. “Because...Oh, I think you just wanna hear it ‘cos you would like to tease me about it again, hmm?” Cinnamon looked up into the bully’s unimpressive owl face. Tina was obviously taken aback, and Cinnamon shoved her way past the dumfounded bird.

“Dad,” called Cinnamon, “Can I talk to you for a second?” Eaglewing, poised on a branch, said “Cinnamon, what is troubling you, my dear?”

She said “Can I use the workshop?”

Eaglewing looked surprised. “Of course, but...” – now he was speaking to the wall.

Cinnamon knew exactly what to do. She had all she needed from light metal sheets to leather strips to make her contraption. The lamp was on early, and burnt late. “Nearly done” muttered Cinnamon. She burst out the door and, to Tina’s surprise, swept high into the sky. Eaglewing whooped and soared up to her side. Her dream had come true – she could fly once again.

She hovered over the forest and the view, which for so long Cinnamon had only seen from the ground, now stretched far below her. The wind carried her home.

Judge’s thoughts: There’s plenty to admire about this story: the sort-of trick opening in which we don’t know who Cinnamon is (for a few seconds I thought she was human); the way in which the eaglet sees off the school bully; and her resourcefulness in solving a terrible problem for herself. Tactile, and speedy, and a mouthful or two of wit. Very pleasing!

Qin, 16, North Broward Preparatory School



The 2 sides

Amelie, 11, The British School of Guangzhou

It all started with a thought
A small thought which carried great ambition
Now, it was up to mankind to make a decision.

From the first spark of the caveman
People have been doing everything they can
to break through and accomplish more
the effects of this all too often have led to war

Devastation, misery, power and greed
guided by ambition men have felt the need
To forget the consequences and win at all cost
In times like this, all sanity is lost

Spanning history from Nero to Hitler to ISIS
Sadly Ambition continues to create crisis
Casting the world in infinite darkness and fear
It seems like no hope is near.

But whenever there is darkness there is light,
And there are so many people who shine so bright,
And ambition has guided so many more
Than people who have only started war.

The Egyptians had so much ambition
It helped them build with great precision
And created such beauty around
Their legacy continues to astound

It inspired the rise of an empire in Greece
Whose thinking and Ideas promoted democracy and peace
Their determination fueled the foundations of so much
we know today

From mathematics to science and dramatic play!

Leonardo da Vinci a genius who saw the future
in a unique way,
Designed and developed things that people would say,
Showed the world what true dreamers could do,
And made us all believe what we can do to.

Bill Gates and Steve Jobs two people who
changed our lives,
With technology enables so many to thrive,
To ideate, create and constantly innovate,
Taking the world forward with progress not hate.

Ambition itself is neither here nor there,
It's up to all individuals to care
To use it to destroy or create
I hope that we can perpetuate
A collective force of strength

Max, 11, British International School of Houston



Onwards and Upwards

Alexander, 11, The British International School Abu Dhabi

Standing at the base looking up to the peak.
Mount Snowdon stands before me,
My knees start to creak!
I take long deep breaths and remember my training,
I've worked hard for this day so will not be complaining.

Two years ago I decided to tackle Mount Snowdon in
Wales,
I knew it would be a battle.
My mind and my body had to be trained,
To be fit and fearless and to know the terrain.

I started with small peaks in all kinds of weather.
The wind rain and snow so fierce,
I was at the end of my tether.
I climbed, I fell, I was bruised and I bled,
My dream was so close I had to keep ahead.

Night and day I climbed as hard as I could,
My friends all told me I never should.
They said it was dangerous, that I must be mad.
But I knew I had to, I wanted it so bad.

A year into practice I was doing so well,
But on a wet windy day I slipped and I fell.
I fractured my wrist so I had to stop climbing,
But this would not stop me from planning new timings.

A few weeks later I was back on my mountain,
Working harder than ever,
I climbed higher and higher, I did not ever say never.
I stretched and pulled my muscles as long as I must,
I was reaching extreme heights, if I fell now I would turn
into dust.

And so the time came for the big climb itself,
I held on to my dream, the peak, the top!
I looked all around me, the view was incredible,
Blue skies and sunshine, and what a huge drop!
I achieved my ambition, and you all can too,
Just believe in yourself, just go and do!



Nicolas, 11, The British School Warsaw



Ambition is...

Astrid, 10, British International School of Washington

Aimee, 12, Jasmine, 12, Jessica, 11, Seamchang, 11 and Mona, 12, Northbridge International School Cambodia

Ambition is...

Ambition is the path to success,
Without ambition, no goal can be met.
Ambition is a feeling,
A burning sensation in your heart.
It's not about how good you are,
But how good you want to be.

Dream big.
Think outside the box.
So they say,
The box is just a box, after all.

Ambition is like a fall leaf,
Hanging on the branch of a tree,
Trembling, afraid to fall to the ground,
But finally lets go.

Ambition is like a droplet who knows,
The sea is out there somewhere,
Determined to find it.
Whatever it takes.

Ambition is a great determination,
Like a balloon that grows bigger and bigger,
And bursts,
Filled with happiness and joy,
Impossible to contain.



Ambition

Frederic, 9, Léman
International School, Chengdu

A man with terrible burned skin
My mind is telling me to leave
But my heart tells me to stay and look closer
Is there really nothing I can do to change his situation
Try to improve his life
If I put in money others will follow
One step in the right direction can make a difference
Never think that your choices cannot make a change

Ivan, 11, The English International
School Prague



Aquatic Adele

Adele, 8, The British International School of Charlotte

This story was inspired by Charlie and the Chocolate Factory. In this story, because of over ambition, the character came to a rather unusual end.

The ninth Golden Ticket was found by a girl called Aquatic Adele.

Aquatic Adele was an unusual girl who loved everything to do with wildlife. She was sitting on her bed reading her issue of National Geographic, munching on a Wonka candy bar, surrounded by reporters.

“So,” Adele said, “I was swimming when I asked my mom if I could have that Wonka candy bar I had saved up. She said yes, so I unwrapped the candy bar and there, right in front of me, was a golden ticket!”

“Do you go swimming every day?” one reporter asked.

“Almost,” answered Adele.

“What is your favourite animal?” questioned another.

“Dolphins,” replied Adele.

“Have you ever visited an aquarium?” asked a reporter, holding a microphone to Adele’s mouth.

“No,” said Adele, “Unless you count Clearwater Marine Aquarium, which rescues animals too.”

“When are you going swimming, today?”

“Now,” said Adele, and marched out of the room.

A few days later they arrived at the factory...

“Be very careful in this room, children,” advised Wonka as

he took a bunch of keys out of his pocket.

They found themselves inside an amazing room. There was a huge pool filled with blue liquid. “That pool is filled with, my newest invention, Aqua juice!” announced Willy Wonka. “If you drink it you will be able to breathe underwater.”

A fancy TV rested on a table facing the pool. Underneath the table were stacks of breath-taking movies and documentaries about nature. There were lounge chairs beside the pool with tables and cup holders. On the wall there were some glossy posters of dolphins and other sea life. There was a bookshelf holding books about sea life kept upright by shiny dolphin book-ends. Stacks of National Geographic lined the walls.

Sand surrounded the glittering pool and Oompa Loompas were splashing in the pool. But there were no whoops. No yells. Only splashing. Their mouths were sealed shut.

“Why are the Oompa Loompas mouths sealed shut?” asked Aquatic Adele.

“The other day I tested the aqua juice on them and they grew gills!” replied Willy Wonka.

She suddenly noticed the whole room smelled like cotton candy! “What makes the cotton candy smell?”

“The Aqua juice smells and tastes like cotton candy,” answered Willy Wonka.

“I want to taste the drink!” Adele interrupted rudely.

“No dear, I already told you that it is not ready yet,” said Willy Wonka sternly.

“Then I’ll get it myself!” and with that, she started to sprint toward the pool, did a fantastic dive and splashed right in! What happened next was quite unusual. Her cheeks had little slits that were sucking bubbles up!

“She’s getting gills!” cried her mother. “Help her!”

An Oompa Loompa suddenly appeared with a large net and fished her out of the Aqua Juice into a bathtub which another four Oompas Loompas had carried in. They picked up the tub, which was much heavier now that it had Adele in it, and carried her out of the room. Her mother, having fainted with terror, being carefully carried behind.

Alex, 14, The British International School Bratislava



The FOBISIA Champ

Gabriella, 9, Regents International School Pattaya

KAPOW, KAPOOF, BOOM.

“Enough Lindsay!”

POW, BOOM, KAPOW, CRACK.

“Lindsay, karate practice was over hours ago. GO!” demanded Lindsay’s karate teacher: Jordan Romanoff.

“Okay.” Lindsay groaned unsatisfied.

Meet Lindsay Brookeham, she’s a 15 year tomboy. She hates everything girly and pink, she loves go-Karting and wrestling. She lives at a nice place called Bittle Water Resort in the calm, relaxing California surrounding. She always stays in constant motion, she very rarely takes time to enjoy the world because she’s always in a rush, or at least that’s what her mum says. She only has one dream... to make the FOBISIA Team.

As soon as Lindsay got home she rushed to get into her swimming kit, then she darted out to the public pool. The pool was a whopping 50 meters long. It was as deep as the sea. The crystal blue water shimmered like little diamonds had been dropped in the pool. The girls changing room was vast and spacious, it smelled of lavender and roses mixed together. However the boys changing room had a strong smell of expired milk and rotten meat.

While Lindsay was walking home, her usual bullies, George and Bob, came and started taunting her. This was usual to Lindsay considering they had taunted her for 7 years. She wanted to tell her parents but she couldn’t. George and Bob were from a different school.

When she got home she went up to her bedroom she started thinking if she could make FOBISIA. She thought long and hard. She pictured George and Bob replaying. Each time she heard them they said: “Your not good at sports, y’all at that posh, expensive Hampton Hills boardin’ school.” George and Bob said millions of mean comments but this was just one. She started losing self-confidence and then she lost her confidence completely. She had nothing but doubt.

About 10 days later, she didn’t want to try out even though she had try-outs marked on her calendar for a whole year. The first day was T-ball. George and Bob’s mum was friends with Mrs. Brookeham so they had to go and support her.

She continued to do exceptionally well for everything that week. When she received the precious paper that told her if she was accepted into FOBISIA, she knew that the paper held her future. She opened the envelope... she was IN!!!!

She literally screamed the house down! Her parents came down with a blunt object and a fire extinguisher hoping no one was hurt. “Mum, Dad I got into FOBISIA!”

“That’s great pumpkin! That’s what I call being ambitious.” remarked her dad.

“Fabulous, I’m so proud of you sweetie!” squealed her mum.

“Next up we have Senior girls 100 Meter sprint.” the announcer called.

“Dear Lord, please bless that today I can have all the strength I need, please let me do my best.

Amen.” Lindsay always prayed before doing any sports. She was in Beijing doing FOBISIA

BOOM! The starter pistol fired. She ran faster than Usain Bolt, her opponent’s lagged like a computer that was 20 years old.

The crowd were on their feet cheering like maniacs!

Then she had Soccer, Then T-ball and then Track & Field.

She ended up winning all GOLD’S in FOBISIA and she was so proud!!!

Oliver, 9, The British School of Beijing, Sanlitun



Rachel Carson's Ambition and Contribution to the World

Hannah, 10, North Broward Preparatory School

Rachel Carson was born on May 27, 1907 in Springdale, Pennsylvania. Rachel's parents were Maria McLean and Robert Carson. She had two siblings; they were Marian and Robert Carson Jr. Her mom was a schoolteacher and piano teacher, and Rachel's dad was a salesman. Rachel loved to explore the woods around her house with the family's dog candy. Her dad owned 65 acres of farmland. Rachel's dream was to see the ocean. She had wanted to since she was little. She would listen to the ocean through her mother's shells, and dream about the sand and beautiful water.

Rachel loved school; she was a great student with good grades. She enjoyed all subjects especially Science and English. Rachel loved to read, her favorite books were the *Peter Rabbit* books and *The Wind in the Willows* series. She enjoyed playing field hockey and basketball, she started those sports because she didn't have many friends and she thought that would be a great way to make friends. Rachel graduated in the top of her class and attended Pennsylvania College for Women. Determined to become a writer, she had majored in English, but halfway into her studies she changed to biology. She first saw the ocean on a trip during a summer fellowship in Woods Hole, Massachusetts. She loved the ocean and it met her high expectations. Rachel was awarded a scholarship to John Hopkins University to finish her graduate work in biology.

After Rachel finished her work at John Hopkins, she got a job at the U.S. Bureau of Fisheries, where she would write radio stories about the ocean. Later, Rachel was promoted to Junior Aquatic Biologist. Her very first book, *Under the Sea Wind*, was published in 1941. It got very good reviews but sold poorly in the beginning. Then, people started to hear more about her and her work, and it started selling very well.

During the 1940's DDT, the world's strongest pesticide was banned because of Rachel. She found out it was terrible for the environment and would kill plants and animals. Rachel would stop at nothing, and it was finally banned.

During that time, her mother died and she was devastated. Her bad luck kept coming, as she got diagnosed with breast cancer, infections on both knees, and the flu, in 1950. She worried that this would stop her from her work, but she kept going; informing people about the importance of their earth and the living things around them. That year, she also published a new book, *The Sea Around Us*. In 1962, she published yet another book *Silent Spring*, which would be her last. Her cancer got worse and on April 14, 1964 Rachel Carson died.

I'll always remember the importance of Rachel Carson, her ambition and what she did for the world!

Angelina, 9, The British School of Beijing, Sanlitun



Reach High

Keira, 9, and Grace, 9, The British International School Budapest
Ilinca, 18, The English International School Prague

Be ambitious
Reach up high
Take your dreams to the sky
Follow the path
That doesn't lead you below
Meet someone new and say hello
Find the angel on the mountain
She will guide you to the wishing fountain
Take your wish to the sky
Go somewhere immortals lie
There you will find your dream tonight
Find the north star look at it hard
Feel the wind blow left and right
As the sun begins to give light
The birds are singing with great might
As the waves sway with ambition
As the world gives life to new
Adventures growing inside of you
Be ambitious you will get great power
You will find the great tower
Be ambitious
Nothing less
Follow your dreams and you will do best.



President Worries

James, 11, Nord Anglia International School Shanghai, Pudong

Ever since being able to think, Jake had had high ambitions (being captain of the school swimming team, reaching grade eight piano, wanting to be president.) Although not everyone was overly impressed by this, his mother and father had pounding headaches from hours of tuneless notes being played on their piano! Jake was fairly good looking, with close cropped sandy colored hair, vibrant blue eyes and a sturdy build.

At ten years old, Jake had three black belts in different forms of martial arts, he was his local football team star player and most of all stunning he was already capable of a B in politics at GCSE standard. While the majority of his achievements didn't earn him popularity points with fellow pupils, Jake was confident of a bright future. Being an extremely ambitious boy, Jake had no time to think about anyone but him.

After a dazzling performance in his GCSE's and A-levels Jake was a proud pupil of the California college of politics. Choosing the most ambitious of targets-the president, meant grueling class work and staff who handed out the strictest of detentions for breathing loudly. Disciplined and well informed Jake had a high probability of running for president.

Never once going out clubbing or partying, saved a considerable amount of money. With all of that spare cash, he settled down near the White House in hope of one day being situated there for work.

Many tense months sluggishly dragged by with the national talks done by presidents coming ever closer. Every call that

came through, sent him into an excited frenzy thinking that it could be the ambassador telling him to participate in the campaign.

Eventually, on the Monday before the speeches came to an end, when Jake had only a slither of hope left he thankfully received the most important call of his successful career. Hurriedly writing an enticing speech at short notice is a challenging task. Having to be the the last candidate to speak was nerve wracking for Jake and he felt like backing out. As each talk outdid the last he became as nervous as a tabby cat cornered by a growling Alsatian.

Whilst he talked all eyes and people unique in their own way were gazing solemnly at him, and a ripple of applause went through the audience as he left the stage.

It then seemed as though the days flew by, and soon the same election slips were cascading into the counters offices, then being clarified by adjudicator. Once only a few votes were left to trickle in, all candidates were given a copy of the standing votes. As soon as Jake peeked at his posh letter, he instantly became devastated and his face fell...

For, he had been voted for once!

Because of this he sold his house and moved abroad to finally settle down as a regular old businessman.

The moral of this story is ambition is a good thing, but you must have time for and respect other people.

Isabella, 17, North Broward Preparatory School



Learning to Fly

Elena, 9, Dover Court International School Singapore

Once there was a little bird who thought that he could fly,
He asked his very pretty mum if he could have a try,
She said, "You're being too ambitious!"
But the little bird, he got his wishes,
He tried and tried to take to the skies

But every time he failed.
His father said, "Really now, I think it's time you bailed."
He begged to have another go as a hero he'd be hailed,
His parents said, "The winds will blow,
Then you can have another go."
He tried and tried to take to the skies
But every time he failed.

From nearby crows he sought some help but
they were mean and bad,
To make them listen to his pleas, he jumped
around like mad,
They said with glee, "You lack the knack!
Position your wings still further back,"
He tried and tried to take to the skies
But every time he failed.

Next night he left his bed alone to find the wise old owl,
He asked to watch him hunt with ease for succulent
tasty fowl,
With all instructions in his head,
He left the safety of his bed,
His parents watched him take to the skies,
They called him down and said, "High Five!"



Abdulla, 10, Nord Anglia International School Al Khor



Judge's thoughts: *This particular piece or work by Abdulla is simply beautiful. With its impressionistic and expressive representation of the story, alongside its bold colours and simple, daring brushwork, making this a brave and lovely image. I adore it.*

The Fate of Nogard

Katherine, 11, The British School of Beijing, Shunyi

Lantern soared above Nog. He tried to remember what Profecan had said. Profecan had murmured to him, 'Find the fire within Lantern, to become a mighty king. Light the fire within Lantern, to be able to do fate-changing things.'

Lantern flapped away from Nog, his beloved country, and headed towards Ard. Nog was in peril; the malicious King Dungeon (a grey dragon with red eyes) was killing and forcing dragons to fight. Despite the fact that the country was a mess, Dungeon made it worse. Lantern adored Dungeon's fair daughter, Princess Onyx (a black dragon with kind blue eyes). Lantern remembered her heartbreaking sobs and her dead mother...

Lantern hovered above the arena and peered in. Dungeon's laugh echoed around the circular building and filled the castle as Queen Gemstone faced Leaf, a soldier. Her sky blue scales were reflected in Leaf's pale orange eyes, fear lingered around her. Leaf gave a menacing hiss and swiped at her stomach. Blood trickled from a wound where he had scratched her. Leaf slashed his claws through her fragile neck when she faltered. The horrifying sight of Gemstone's limp body as she collapsed to the ground caused Onyx to gasp. She darted inside the castle, her sobs piercing Lantern's heart.

Lantern glided towards the incoming land. Dragons draped with jewels strolled down the streets. Fruit and meat sellers

called to the passerby's. In addition to the long flight, Lantern's stomach growled and he stopped to rest. He needed to find Queen Pearl and ask for her advice. Lantern peered into his leather pouch and spent two of his coins on a chicken. When he approached the stone castle, two guards stopped him as he tried to enter.

"Halt," barked one of them, "Who goes there?"

"Well, I am on a mission to become the king of Nog and I need your queen's help." Lantern said as he looked at them ruefully.

A moment later, he found himself being shoved inside. They dragged him to Queen Pearl's room. She looked up and saw him, her look turned surprised.

"Lantern! You are finally here!" She boomed, gesturing for him to come closer.

"All I will say is, be brave." She shouted as she pushed him out the door.

Lantern found himself soaring in the direction of the palace of Nog. He landed on the balcony and knocked the window. Princess Onyx peeked outside and opened the glass doors.

Her eyes were gleaming with interest. Lantern smiled and gazed into her eyes.

"I need to take your father's place. I want to help Nog." Lantern whispered. He followed her to Dungeon's room and threw him off the balcony. Dungeon's wings were paralyzed with shock and he plummeted toward the ground of the arena. Onyx looked pleased, she was free from her father. She twined her tail with his. Lantern felt dizzy, but he knew one thing for sure. He had succeeded.

JiaHui, 11, The British School of Beijing, Shunyi



A Girl and a Horse

Jaymie, 10, Collège Champittet Nyon

A long, long time ago there was a girl named Clara. She loved to ride horses. It was one of her favourite things to do. During the summer vacation she went to the Rocky Mountains to a horse ranch called Pegasus (only for girls). It was her favourite place to go, she had been going there since she was born and that's why she had so many friends.

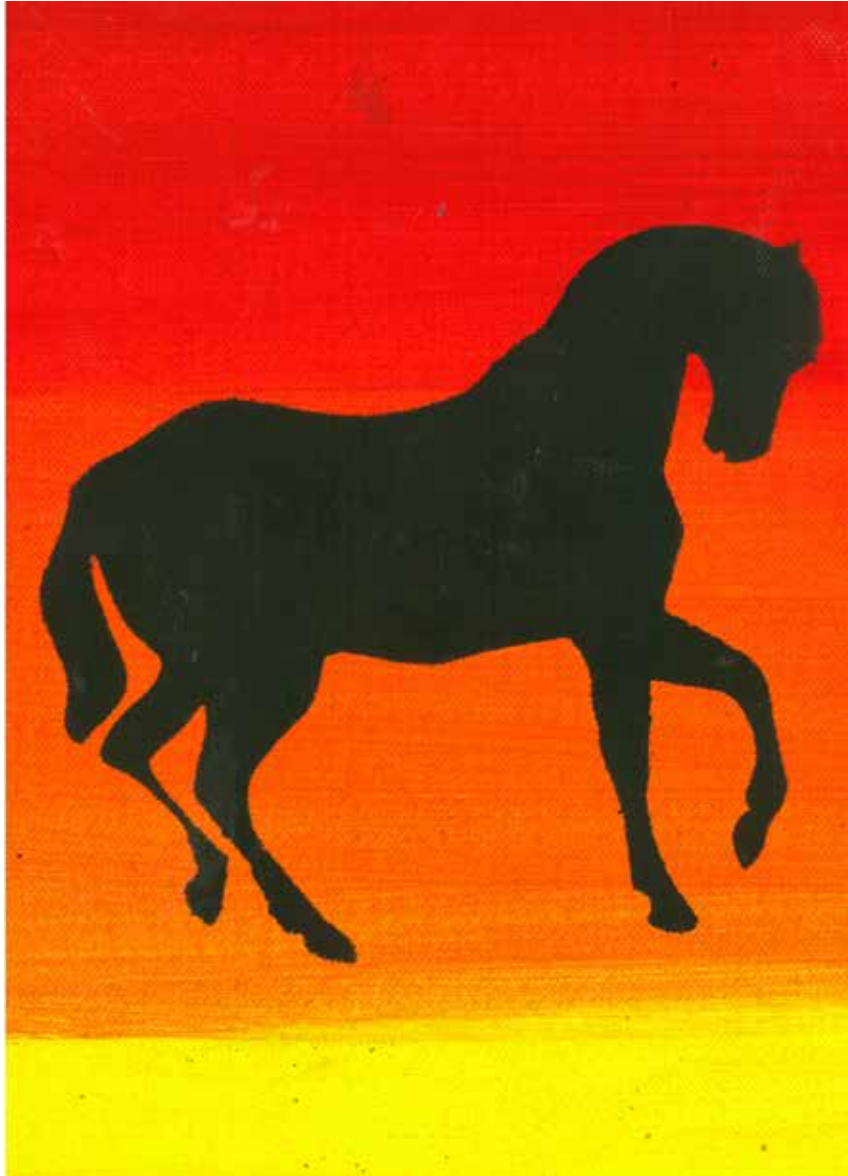
"Hi Clara" said her friends to her, "Hi Emily, Sophie and April, want to go for a walk?" Her friends accepted with enthusiasm. They admired the nature and the sound of the birds flying around them. It was in the middle of April and the flowers were blooming around them "How beautiful the nature is this year in The Rocky Mountains". After 15 minutes of walking they finally went back to the ranch. When they arrived, they took their baggage and went in their room. They went in the room for 4 girls and after a few minutes they went to the selection of the horses (this when the girls get to choose their horses). Clara chose a horse named Delphine which was white and had gray spots on her skin. Sophie admired Clara a lot. Every day the girls had riding lessons and Clara was the best of the group, her speciality was to jump over fences with Delphine.

But one day Clara was training for the big race, she jumped over a fence and wasn't strong enough and she fell on the dirty ground. After a few minutes she opened her eyes. Luckily she didn't hurt herself, but she was really afraid. The next passing weeks Clara didn't ride because she was too afraid. The race approached and Clara never went on Delphine since she fell. It was the day of the race and Clara decided not to go to the race. She was too scared and did

not have self-confidence. When Sophie found out that Clara stayed at the ranch, she decided to stay too because she wanted Clara to ride again.

A few minutes after the bus for the race left the ranch. Sophie asked if Clara wanted to go for a walk with the horses. Clara accepted but only if they were not riding. Suddenly, Sophie's horse fell on the ground. Sophie wasn't hurt but her horse had a sort of heart attack. That is why Clara had to go to the doctor and tell him. Otherwise Sophie's horse would have died! Clara was courageous and went to the doctor just in time. Sophie's horse got better and healed. Now Clara is an adult and is a world champion horse rider with her horse Delphine. But she will never forget what happened when she was little at the ranch.

Siya, 9, Nord Anglia International School Al Khor



Game. Set. Match.

Kriti, 11, British International School of Chicago, Lincoln Park

My hands perspire. My skin drips. My heart races...

Encircling me, thousands watch eagerly as the grip on my racket tenses. The oppressive heat covers me like a blanket while I wipe my forehead, trying to smear the terrible anxiety away. Looking up, I see my opponent, standing on the precisely cut- grass. She looks ready to demolish anything in her way. I walk up to the baseline, the line that I have stood on infinite times before. Nevertheless I feel different standing here. I feel pressure, lots of it...

I pour a cold bucket of water on me. The heat is overwhelming; I've been on court for 5 hours practicing hard, every single day. Since I was 7, I've been dedicated to tennis: doing fitness, watching the pros or playing the game. I love tennis. Playing the game not only builds up my confidence, but drives me to achieve more and to be ambitious. However, sometimes I feel like I want to give up. Despite this terrible feeling, my mind is too strong to quit...

There's something I have to tell you: I have had this dreadful losing streak. Ever since I broke my ankle, I haven't been playing well in tournaments. Before this incident, I was a top ranked junior, a grand slam was a certainty; I would fly across the court, run like the wind and use my racket like a sword. Now, I'm average; I sink across the court, run like a toddler and use my racket as a shield. *Ok, maybe I am exaggerating a little, but I am undeniably not playing my best.*

"We are leaving sweetheart!"

"Coming mummy!" Today I will play in the finals in my 9th tournament back. *Yep, I finally obliterated my losing streak!*

Career- changing. That's how I would describe this qualifier tournament; if I win, Wimbledon would greet me! See how imperative this is? Butterflies flutter in my stomach as I walk to the car. Not the vibrant, exciting butterflies but the queasy, nauseating ones...

Unexpectedly, I feel a bolt. Steadying myself up, I realize that I face planted into the seats, making a dent.

"Darling, are you all right? I think the car just broke down!" flusters mum. "Yeah, how shall I get to the match?"

"Sorry sweetie, we won't be able to make it on time," murmurs dad.

I argue with them. How could this happen to me after all my hard work?

"Fine, I'll run!"

"What? Wait! It's too far." They say in unison.

But I already start running shouting, "I love you, wish me luck!"

Passing many strangers speculating why a girl with a tennis bag is running down the streets of Edinburgh, I make my way to the tennis center. My muscles moan in agony as

I climb the stairs leading to the registration desk. With a speedy glance at the clock, I notice there's enough time to take a shower before my match. *Thank heavens! ...*

My muscles are jelly: squishy but with the right amount of tension. Outside the locker-room are my parents; joy and pride floods their faces. They give me a big warm hug and before I know it, my name is being called. "Time to play champion," I whisper to myself...

Duc, 8, British International School Hanoi



Discover

Madele, 9, The British International School Shanghai, Puxi

Malaria is a very serious disease. It's typically transmitted through the bite of an infected Anopheles mosquito. You usually find these mosquitoes in the tropical countries of Africa and Asia. Infected mosquitoes carry the Plasmodium parasite. When this mosquito bites you, the parasite goes into your bloodstream. If you have been infected you will develop in a few weeks symptoms like shaking chills, high fever (up to 40.5 degree C), convulsions and coma. Malaria is a life-threatening condition and that there is no vaccine to prevent. It is estimated that more than 3 billion people are at risk and 1 million die from it every year.

My ambition is to find the vaccine to eradicate this disease from Earth. As of today infected people receive medication but parasites are sometimes resistant to drugs. Moreover these treatments are expensive for poor people living in the areas at risk.

The reason why I want to find a vaccine for Malaria is because a lot of people suffer from it for their whole life. This new vaccine could then give them a better life. Finding the vaccine could also avoid people losing part of their family, close friends or children to become orphaned.

It will also allow countries at risks to spend less money to cure the infected people. They can then use this money to improve children's education and to build hospitals, overall offering a better life to their populations.

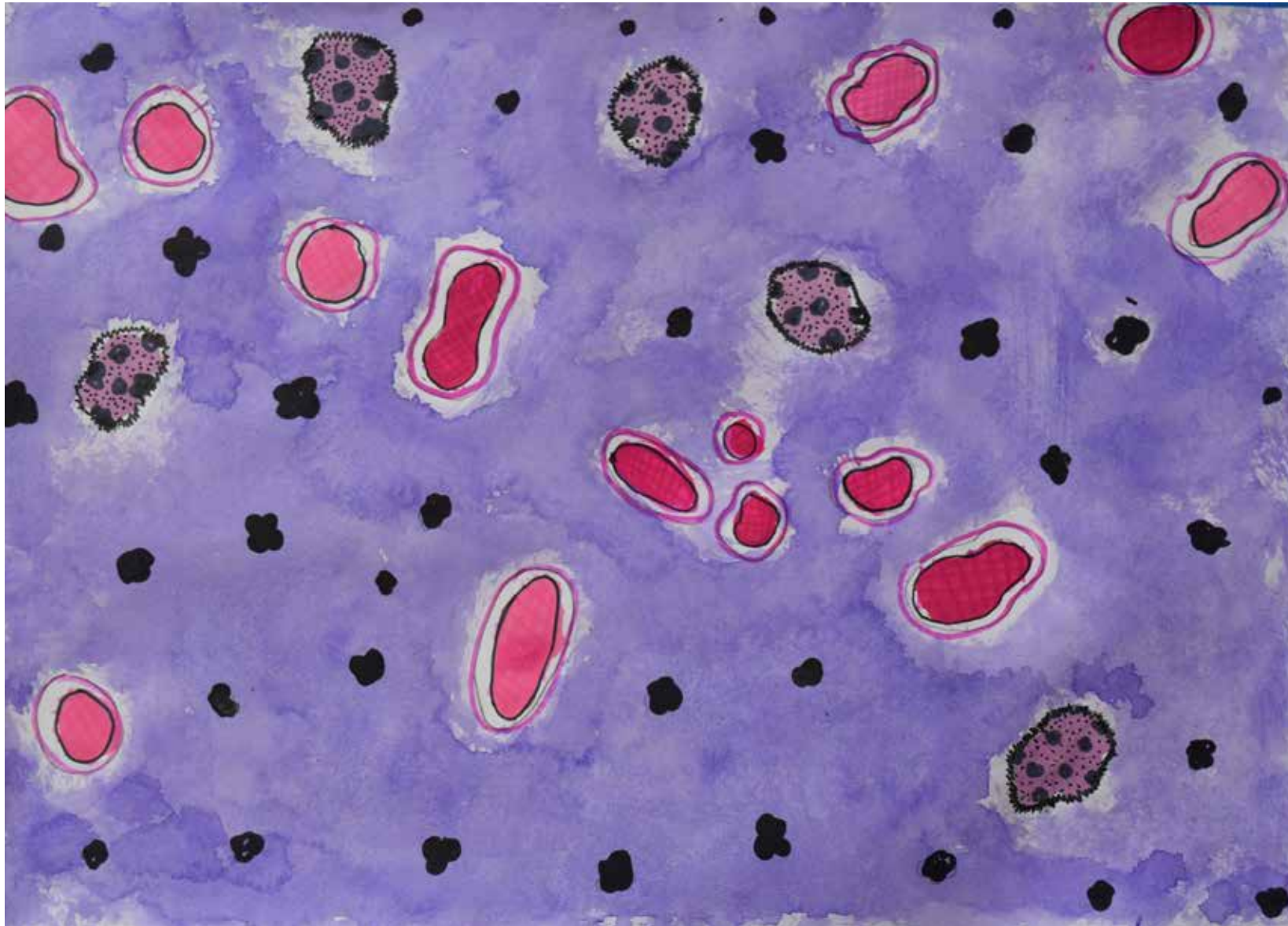
At last it will allow more scientists to focus on other deadly diseases; therefore more of them can be eradicated from Earth.

The first step to become a vaccine scientist is to get my Baccalaureate with honours. Moreover I should have very good recommendations from my secondary teachers to join a very famous university in the U.S.A or Europe. After joining one of them I will study chemistry, biochemistry, biology or microbiology to obtain my Bachelor of Science degree in one of these majors. Afterwards I should get my Master of Science degree and my PhD (Doctor of Philosophy) degree.

I will then find a job in a laboratory or in a vaccine research centre. I prefer not working for a private pharmaceutical company because I don't want that people make money from my discoveries. I will devote my time searching for the vaccine of Malaria with a team of scientists. Our laboratory will not use animals as testing subjects. Moreover my vaccine has to be cheap to be produced easily in any country that suffers from Malaria.

In conclusion, I will try my best to fulfil my ambition even if it's challenging and takes me my whole life to figure out. It will show my great effort and contribution to the world. It will also be a great accomplishment to the people that are in need and it would allow more people to have a more comfortable life and bring a bright future for their children.

Ammenah, 8, Compass International School Doha, Rayyan



Paintings

Maria, 11, British International School of Houston

I was on my regular chores when James bumped into me. “Hey mom, Isabel wanted to see you!” He exclaimed twirling through the corridors. I resisted the urge to ruffle his tufty, blonde hair because I knew that would just embarrass him. So instead I gave James a halfhearted high-five. I work at the Old Maple retirement center and Isabel’s my favorite client. I don’t know when she came here or how; what I do know is that she needs my help.

Dawdling through the peaceful hall, her olive eyes opened wide in wonder, I find Isabel gazing out of the window. She is often there, I don’t quite know why; watching the cars zoom by. Gently, I guide her back to her bedside.

“Stop” Isabel whispers; I stumble. I have never got used to her voice, the way she hisses her s’s and rolls her r’s. It’s beautiful really. “Let me tell you my story”; not bothering to hear what I have to say, Isabel begins.

“I was born in the autumn of 1947 close to the whispering trees. To my father I was a disappointment however my mother thought I was the most wonderful thing she’d ever seen. She was ill, ever so ill, after I was born. She died a month later cradling me in her arms. I grew up feeling the burden of my mother’s death, knowing father blamed me for it.

At age four my father announced we were moving to California. “Papa no! Pleaaase, we have everything here in Brazil” Th-that was the first time he raised a hand to me. I cried all night...Just before dawn I used my grubby fingers to draw pictures in the soot, pictures...pictures of me and Mama. Soon I realized this was the only freedom I had,

to draw. And from that day I was determined to become an artist.

In America I learnt that the world wasn’t just Brazil, it was everywhere. Taking inspiration from the vibrant colours of my homeland, paints splashed off my palette. I painted chaotic crowds and my memories of the jungle. I had begun to fulfill my destiny.

“You need a drink!” I chided like a mother.

“You’re so good to me nurse” rasped Isabel. I hid a secret smile of pleasure and busied myself with Isabel’s medicine. “Drink, then talk,” I replied.

“Everything bright and beautiful, that’s what happened next. I was finally getting the education I’d always wished for and was going to school every day except Sunday. I absolutely loved it! I was free from my horrible father and learning, which is one of the things I adore. The teachers were harsh and would cane us but I didn’t have a single care in the world. I was as free as a bird!”

I painted and painted. At first no one understood, or didn’t want to understand, my strange, striking work. I’d paint pictures of people trapped, or people as birds! It wasn’t until my college years that life took another twist.

I was discovered by Professor Andrews who entered me into one of the most prominent art schools, Yale. Years later I have still not thanked him.”

I watched Isabel sink back into her pillow to sleep. I would see her paintings one day.

Beth, 9, The British School of Beijing, Sanlitun



The Thirteenth Games

Nathanial, 11, Compass International School Doha, Rayyan

My hands shook. My heart and muscles pulsed. The sun was beating down on this scorching summer's day. The entire district had gathered to watch the Thirteenth Games 2056. I, James Speed, opened my eyes and surveyed the long, red-clay track. I placed my trainers on the wooden pedestal set out on the inner lane.

Harry Sloth, the reigning champion from the neighbouring village and my worst nemesis was in the lane next to me. He shook his long, raggedly black hair away from his emerald eyes. He stuck out his tongue at me tauntingly and mouthed, "See you at the finish line, loser". I soon felt that huge dam of anger that ripped through my organs. My eyes glowed fiercely like a menacing leopard. We both snarled at each other...but the gun had fired and we all had started the ten kilometre race.

We all shot across the landscape; ripping up the gravel and splattering it all on the disqualification camera now lagging behind by only about 50cm. The crowds' cheers echoed deeply in my body, which gave me gallons of hope that I could win. "Chequered flag, here I come!!!" I thought as I leaped into the lead. I was a bird...I was a plane...I was a supersonic jet! I left my opponents far behind and the quarter-race signal fired. For the first time in my life, euphoria rushed into my torso as I hoped to win...

Unexpectedly, a dreadful whip of pain exploded in my legs causing me to cry out a high-pitched scream which split the air and drew a collected gasp from the crowd. My opponents closed the gap as the half-race signal fired. For a second, I stopped and thought, "Can I win this??"

Then another voice erupted in my head. "Yes you can, James Speed. This is your destiny. Rise and run. Don't lose this chance!!"

I clawed my way to an unsteady standing position as my pain gradually trickled away. The crowds' sudden cheers erupted in joy, giving me the courage to run.

All of a sudden, a vast boot crashed into my back; slamming me straight onto my snarling face. The immensely-echoing sound of a mega phone crackled; announcing Harry Sloth's disqualification as everyone raced past me and two heavily muscled men grabbed him and took him away. Just before he disappeared past the shimmering, metal gateway, he mouthed with flicker of a smile, "At least you can't win".

I was taken aback. All the anger that I had ever felt and hid for almost two decades broke out and ultimately upgraded itself to a terrific amount of adrenaline. A second later, I was up and running faster than I have ever ran before, with anger in a strange way, helping me. The third-quarter signal fired as I shot past my opponents yet again leaving them so shocked that they just collapsed on the hard red-clay ground. The crowd was screaming their heads off as I flew to the finish line in first place and into a picture of applause! As I lifted the trophy, I knew that I had, finally, achieved my childhood ambition.

I am Champion!! My hungry village will finally not starve this year! It has been thirteen years of famine since the solar flares...

Trung, 8, British International School Hanoi

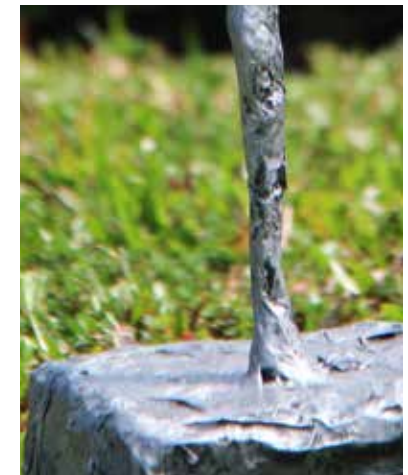


Be The Best You Can

Olivia, 11, The British School Warsaw

Seoyun (artist), 9, and Shayne (photographer), 16, Northbridge International School Cambodia

Work hard, play hard,
Always do your best,
Support others, preserve,
Always take the test,
Never give up, stride for the best,
Never get stressed,
Risk taking, explore your imagination,
Challenge of the quest,
Use your talent, revising mistakes,
Never take a rest



The Strokes for Ambition

Mhairi, 9, The Village
School, Houston

Ambition is what you promise yourself:
I will never give up, I trust that I can do this,
this one thing,
I won't lack faith, or fall on my face
But if I do, I'll get back up,
And shake off the dust
I promise I will keep going forward,
Not go back nor standstill,
I'm going to have fun no matter how the run,
I love to swim, like a fish with a fin,
I will pass every level and earn my medal,
I might one day earn my spot on the team,
In the kingdom of AMBITION,
Where I will stay keen,
On being a fish with a fin,
I'll keep achieving and believing.

Calvin (artist), 9, and Shayne (photographer), 16,
Northbridge International School Cambodia



The Legendary Mountaineer, Sir Edmund Hillary

Richard, 9, The British School of Beijing, Sanlitun

When I was on my way to Auckland New Zealand on plane CA141, a passenger announcement said *“Dear Passengers, we are passing over Mount Cook”*. That was all I needed to know. It was the legendary mountaineer Edmund Hillary’s training mountain!

Edmund Hillary was born in July 20, 1919 in North Island. Hillary was 20 when WWII hit. He joined the Royal NZ Air Force but he was told he had to wait a year. During this time, he went to NZ’s Southern Alps and checked into a mountain lodge. One evening in the lounge, he overheard two men’s story about climbing Mount Cook. Mount Cook was NZ’s tallest peak! Hillary was excited about climbing Mount Cook. After that he spent all his free time climbing. He was inspired by climbing, and little did he know that he would become a famous mountaineer someday.

The next year Hillary went to Europe with the airforce but disaster struck and he was discharged. He stayed in Europe and began climbing the southern Alps. While Ed was climbing the Southern Alps, he became friends with Harry Ayres and George Lowe, two of NZ’s strongest technical climbers.

In May 1951, Hillary and Lowe went to Northern India with two other friends: Earle Riddiford and Ed Cotter, where they were first to climb Mukut Parbat. After reaching the summit, they descended to the town of Ranikhet. There, they received a telegram from Eric Shipton. He was a well-known climber and he was asking Hillary and George Lowe to join their team to climb the world’s tallest mountain – Everest!

This event would change his life. No matter how many dangers lay ahead, Hillary would still do it. He liked adventures and discovering new things. Hillary and Riddiford went to Nepal to join Shipton and climb Everest. Would they make it?

Hillary and Shipton saw a possible route. They would have to climb the Khumbu icefall, a dangerous place that was littered with blocks of ice the size of mansions. The icefall is a steep place and crevasses may open up any second! Hillary attacked the icefall with gusto. He cut steps for climber’s boots, wriggled through cracks in the ice and set up bridges across crevasses. On one occasion his trusty Sherpa, Tenzing Norgay, had to save his life when a piece of ice fell and Hillary fell.

On May 26, Charles Evans and Tom Bourdillon set out to make the first try to the summit. But they failed. They did not have enough oxygen so they came back. For the second try Hillary and Tenzing, who were friends now, would try to get to the summit!

The duo started to climb. At 27,900 feet, they set up a camp and slept. In the morning, Hillary’s boots were frozen. They kept climbing until they could not climb any further. Finally they were on the summit of the edge of the world!

I looked dreamily outside the plane window, wondering what adventures my life might hold. As I looked down at the peak, I saw a man waving his ice axe at me. Could it be Edmund Hillary, the legendary mountaineer?

Enzo, 9, International College Spain



Chicho Fresco

Sofia, 11, British International School of Chicago, South Loop

This was it: the barbed wire fence was just 100 feet away and his dream of freedom was in the palm of his hands. At that moment, he heard a loud, petrifying, pounding roar followed by screams of military men. My grandfather, Chicho Fresco, did not escape communism from Cuba that day, in the early 1960s.

He was delivered to prison, where he would spend a year of his life. When he arrived, he lifted up his sweaty arm and there was a hole. A hole the size a metallic ammunition used to capture him. He was a millimetre away from death, one of many reasons why he was one of the luckiest men alive.

Chicho Fresco had grown up on the eastern-most point of the island called Guantanamo. It was once an area that fed his family in abundance. Prior to the Fidel Castro regime, the Fresco's grew fruits, vegetables, raised small livestock and fished in the rivers and sea. All of these things became illegal, punishable by death, and one of the primary tactics of Fidel Castro: to control Cubans through hunger. Knowing that living off of ration cards, no longer being able to openly practice his Catholic faith and that the militia had free reign of his childhood home was enough for my grandfather to try and escape again. The only thing he would miss was the people, especially his family, and once family is gone, who do you have?

My grandfather had the kind of personality that everyone liked, even the prison guards. At that time, you were allowed to have one weekend out of prison after a year. On that very weekend, a prison guard helped my grandfather

with the correct route and told him to move at night and to hide during the day until he reached the U.S. naval base called Guantanamo Bay. For the next few days, he, one of his younger brothers and a fellow prisoner spent nights and days traveling 20 miles to be free. As they approached the U.S naval base, the military that protected Cuba started chasing them. The first person to climb over the barbed wire fence was my second uncle, Alfredo or Tio Papi as I refer to him. My grandfather followed and when he landed on the side of freedom with bloody hands, he watched Francisco fall back onto Cuban soil. Chicho Fresco risked his own freedom and life to climb back over the fence to help his friend. He knew they would both be murdered in front of the town as an example to prevent future escapes. With guns blaring, both men climbed together to freedom.

The American red cross flew the three men to Miami, Florida, where they saw beautiful free land. Free from guns, the military and Fidel Castro. Their search for a new beginning was complete.

All three men migrated north to the Chicago area where there was work. My grandfather went on to build a legacy filled with strength, love, and most of all, ambition. While we lost him in a car accident more than 20 years ago, he is always remembered. Mom says she sees him in my smile, my sister's compassion, my brother's love, all of which we have because of my grandfather, Chicho Fresco's, ambition.

Giana, 9, British International School of Chicago, South Loop



Woke Up

Sasa, 11, The English International School, Prague

I woke up with sandy lips as I glanced around my immediate environment. To the south I saw a sea, a sea that was gentle and kind at shore but ferocious and thundering deeper out. To the north of me there were two layers of trees. The first tall strong what seemed like coconut trees and the second, short bushy oak trees. The grainy sand was eating my feet away in the boiling hot sun. I had no memory or idea of how I got here all and I had on me was a tattered old shirt and soggy jeans.

I vaguely remembered my Uncle John who would take me on fishing trips every Sunday and the warmth of his cuddle every night when I was scared or worried, but he was not here, beside me now. But now I can understand the old saying you don't know what you have until it's gone. I couldn't stop the warm, silky tears trickling down my face it was too hard, the tears seemed to flood everything I loved and enjoyed away into a deep, deep hole in the bottom of my heart.

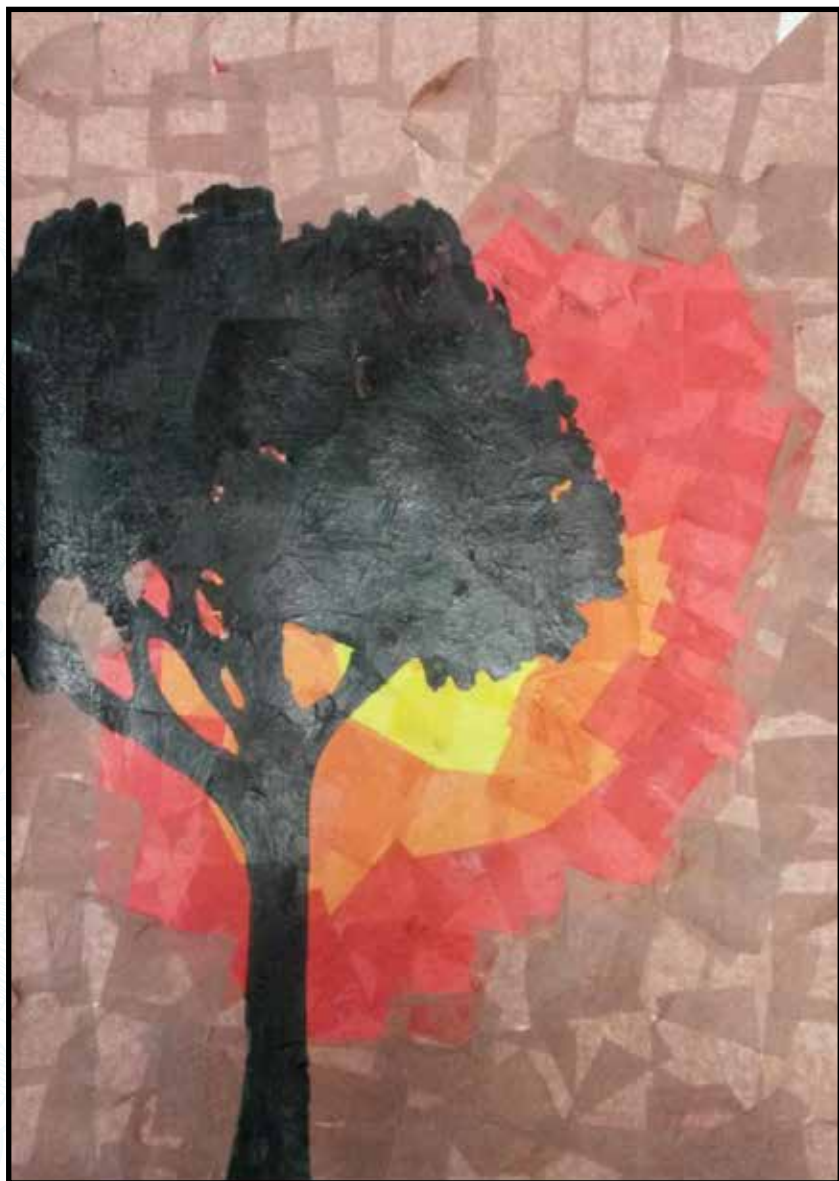
I knew I had to get out of this cruel island if I wanted to see another person again. But how, my first thought turned to the bushy oak trees. I crept over to the fierce oak. Suddenly sharp pain stung through my foot as if a needle pierced my delicate skin. I looked down at my bleeding foot. It was imbedded in the sharp crystal rock. I hopped over as fast as I could to the oak tree. The pain was still stinging hard but

I had no choice to reach my destination. Finally I reached my saver. I wrapped leaves around my pus filled foot and prayed for fast healing. I tied the leaves together tightly as I knew this would help, but the pain remained unbearable and that was my last thought before I passed out.

I woke up and felt a heavy weight trap my body. I wriggled like a mad worm trying to slip out of this godly grip. I looked down towards my stinging stomach and at the fierce log crushing me and cried. Thirst was starting to come to me. It was like gods hand came down to earth and squeezed every inch of liquid out of my body until I was as dry as a cats tongue. I spat on my swelling leg and slipped myself out of the godly grip.

I scavenged around for sticks, twigs, logs and stones, I carved the solid oak down to a flat base and twigs to hold the roof up. The roof consisted my ripped up t-shirt and leaves. To tie these objects together I used varied plants as string. After hours of handy work I finished my craft but before I went back I had to get some water and smashed rocks against the roots of the tree to collect. I walked down the sandy beach thanking and cursing god and said goodbye to the wonderful island and set off.

Aditya, 9, Nord Anglia International School Al Khor



Henry or Henrietta?

Sonny, 11, Nord Anglia International School Hong Kong

“Henrietta, time for ballet!” my mum called as I got into my horrible pink leotard.

“Mum do I have to go?” I asked, but I guess she didn’t bother to answer because she opened the car door signaling to get in. After about 30 minutes of solid arguing, I finally gave in, and got into the car.

Ballet was torture. Ms. Adelaide told me to do the splits so I tried my best. Unfortunately I didn’t know what the splits were, so I ended up trying to do a backflip in front of everyone. Thankfully she explained how to do them but also told me that I was worse than a basketball player. I was so mad I grabbed my bag and sprinted outside. Then I realized, I had nowhere to go. “Oh great.” I said sarcastically to myself.

“Whatcha looking for?” a teenage boy said, he looked around 15 years old. Me being only 13, I said I hated ballet and wanted to do football instead.

“There’s a football pitch right around the corner, we could hang out and play one on one if you like?”

I took this in shock, “What would my mum say?” I asked.

The boy didn’t reply; he just told me to follow him. On the way he told me that his name was Arthur, and asked for mine.

“Henry” I say

“Isn’t Henry a boy’s name?” he asked, so I just told him my full name instead.

“Henrietta, let’s see what you got “

After an hour of football, he congratulated me and asked if I wanted to be on the team. “Count me in!” I shouted. We exchanged numbers, and I went back into the ballet building and apologised for leaving. Ms. Adelaide looked at me and said “Football eh?” I looked at the ground, “I’ve got a deal for you: everyday you come into class with your weekly check. You can then go off and play football with Arthur and I won’t tell your parents.” I wanted to hug her right there and then.

“Sounds great. It’s a deal.”

When I got home I texted Arthur:

Me: “I’m allowed to do football!”

Arthur: “That’s great!”

Me: “What did your coach say? Am I in?”

Arthur: “Unfortunately not, coach doesn’t like the sound of girls playing football.”

I was so upset: my only chance of playing football out the window. I wanted to kill Arthur and his coach, but I had an idea.

“What that’s ridiculous, how’s that possible?”

“Hey guys, we have a new player in our team, his name is Henry.” Wait stop, have you figured out my plan yet, if not, keep reading.

“Cool, what can he do?” asked Peeta.

“Oh nothing much” Henry said.

After 5 years of pretending to be a boy, I decided I would tell the guys who I really am, Henrietta! But it wasn’t that easy:

Me: “Hey guys!”

Teammates: “Hey Henry!”

Me: “I have something to tell you, but you might not be that happy about it.”

Arthur: “Henrietta you don’t have to do this.”

Peeta: “Who’s Henrietta?”

Me: “That’s what I want to talk to you about.”

After a long pause, I carried on.

Me: “OK so there’s a secret I’ve been keeping from you guys, and that secret is...”

June, 11, The British School of Beijing, Sanlitun



Dr Ambitious

Shonchari, 11, Nord Anglia International School Al Khor

“People should wake up in the morning and say I am not job seeker but job creator”

Muhammed Yunus

Do you know anybody who has helped poor people? I know somebody who has helped millions of poor people to have a better life, Muhammed Yunus, a Nobel Laureate, was born in 28th June 1940 in Chittagon, Bangladesh. His father was a successful goldsmith and always encouraged him to seek a better education than him. His biggest inspiration was his mother, who always helped poor people who knocked at the door.

Yunus studied at Dhaka University on a Fulbright scholarship to study economics at Vanderbilt in 1969. The following year, he became an assistant professor of economics at Middle Tennessee State University. Returning to Bangladesh, Yunus headed to Economics Department in Chittagong University.

In 1974, Professor Yunus led his students in to a poor village. They interviewed a poor woman with dusty clothes, who made bamboo stools, and knew that she had to borrow the equivalent of 15p to buy raw bamboo for each stool she made.

Yunus decided to take the matter in his own hand. Firstly, he asked a woman (from the poor village) if she needed money for her family so after making profit she would give him back. Without thinking she said “Don’t give me money! Give it to my husband he knows exactly what to do with the money!”

Before Yunus could say anything she ran away. The more Yunus tried to talk to women the more they were afraid and ran away. Eventually, 19 to 20 women agreed to talk to him. Yunus started to give out loans in low interest.

The government disagreed with giving loans because they did not have security against them and said that Yunus was breaking the rules. Yunus disobeyed the instruction and kept giving micro loans from his own money and saw that it really worked.

He then formed Grameen bank, which means village bank, and 90% of shares belonged to the poor people whereas 10% belonged to the government. In Bangladesh today, Grameen Bank has 2564 branches with 19,800 staff serving 8.29 million borrowers in 81367 villages. On any working day Grameen bank collects an average of \$1.5million weekly instalments. Of the borrowers 97% are women and over 97% of loans are paid back, a successful rate higher than any other banking system.

Grameen methods are applied in 58 countries including U.S.A, France, Netherlands and Norway. In 2006 Dr Yunus received the Nobel prize for helping millions of people to get out of the poverty trap.

Inspired by Dr Yunus, my ambition is to help many people to get out from their terrible life. It brings me to tears watching people begging for food, clothes and money. With my skills and natural talent I wish to help people in an effective way and empower young women to become entrepreneurs!

Jeppu, 11, Compass International School Doha, Rayyan



Life is a Story

Toby, 11, The British International School Bratislava

Life is a story; it has a beginning, middle and end;
Your story will contain problems but those problems
you can amend.

Your story starts as a child, when you don't have a voice,
Your parents do the nurturing,
But later you'll have the choice.

A story comes in genres,
It's your choice to make, you could be shy, scared or
ambitious and happiness depends on which you take.

In the middle of your story there is not just one
path to take,
Live your OWN dreams; you're not a lemming for
goodness sake!

Every story has ups and downs,
Don't be tempted to sit on the fence,
Grasp the nettle, be bold and brave, undefeated
by turbulence.

Your story contains wonders,
More than anything you could dream; only you have to step
out of your circle for those wonders to be seen.

Your story has a villain,
And I'm afraid that villain is fate,
Your villain strikes at unexpected times; sometimes early,
sometimes late.

Your story will be sad; these times will be bad,
But there's only one thing to do, you have to show
resilience and courage, and that way you'll get through.

In your story, live your dreams don't let your
circumstances be a limit.
You can make the change you need if you keep
an adventurous spirit.

You have control over your story, and in that your
happiness depends,
Always believe in yourself, be ambitious until your
story ends.



David, 14, International College Spain



Leonardo Da Vinci - Genius!

Yallini, 10, Northbridge International School Cambodia

Have you ever wondered why everyone adores Leonardo Da Vinci so much? Well I have and I am sure you have too. So to solve that I am going to help you so please read on!

First I am going to tell you about Leonardo's personal life and his successful achievements. He was born on April 15 1452 and he was the son of Ser Piero Da Vinci and a local woman Caterina. He was a marvelous genius. For instance, he was the first one to sketch the first parachute, aeroplane, helicopter, tank, repeating rifle and swinging bridge, so as you can see he was a very active inventor.

Leonardo Da Vinci was a painter, architect, inventor and of course a wonderful scientist. He was ambitious in so many ways, but I am especially inspired by his paintings. I like his paintings because they are really unique, not like some of the artists today who just do a painting of what they see. For instance, he created a new genre of painting that everyone accepted and took on willingly. That is another reason why he is so famous. My two favourite paintings, which I will be talking about, are the *Mona Lisa* and *The Last Supper*. Enjoy!

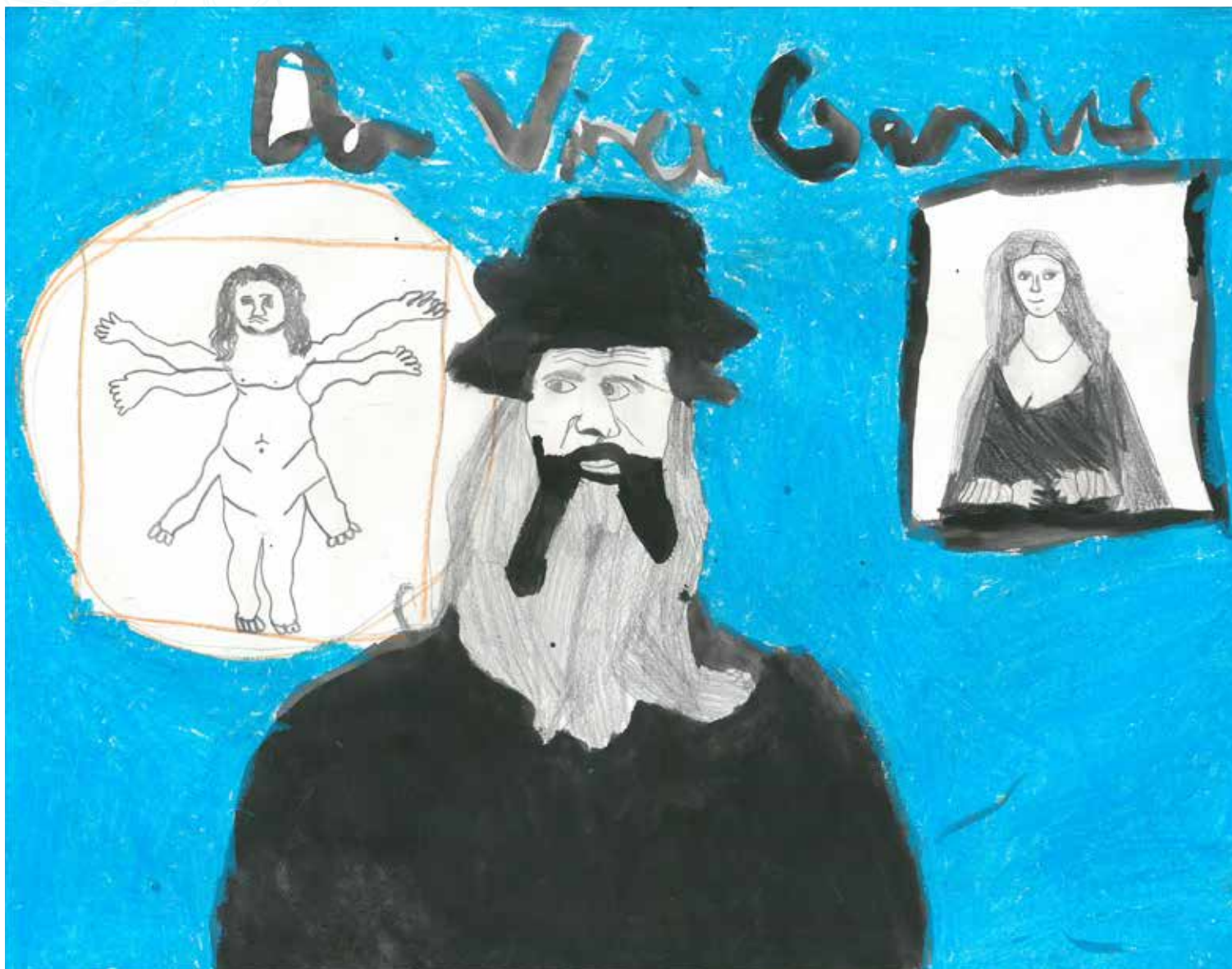
The *Mona Lisa* was one of the most famous art works that Leonardo Da Vinci painted. He was 51 years old when he painted it. The words *Mona Lisa* mean, "My Lady Lisa" in English. The best part is that Leonardo didn't expose this painting at all. For instance he didn't show any sign or indication of this painting in his diaries and books. He also didn't sign, date or give a name to this painting. When I found this out I thought it was not true but believe me he didn't do any of this. Another thing is that no one knows

the exact year when Leonardo Da Vinci painted this piece but many believe that he painted it in the year 1503 or 1504 and continued it for decades. Before I tell you about the next painting, I want to tell you something interesting. If you look closely, you will notice that *Mona Lisa* doesn't have any eyebrows or eyelashes. This is extraordinary!

Another painting that I am going to tell you about is, *The Last Supper*. This painting is also very famous like the *Mona Lisa*. *The Last Supper* was painted in Milan from about 1495 to 1498. It was created for the refectory of the city's Monastery of Santa Maria delle Grazie. It has 13 people including Jesus and Judas. Jesus is right in the middle. Jesus' Disciples are evenly arranged on both sides of him. There have been many stories and suggestions about this painting, including the idea that the person on Jesus' right is Mary Magdalene who some think was Jesus' wife.

Rounding up, I chose Leonardo Da Vinci as my inspiration for being ambitious because of his unique paintings, his creativity and inventions but I didn't really have space to mention all of that, so I decided to focus on my favourites. I hope you enjoyed reading my piece.

Vivan, 10, The British International School Bratislava



Free to Flare

Zephyr, 11, Compass International School Doha, Gharaffa

Head between knees, on the floor of her bedroom, Mai Kingston sat, thinking. Suddenly a noise made her look up. Hoof beats. She jumped up and bounded to the window. Gazing out, Mai saw a herd of horses thundering past. One of them was a bright chestnut galloping at the front of the herd: her horse. Mai watched him from her window, watched him grow up, grow wild.

A couple of days later Mai was in her room when she heard her father come in, back from hunting. Her mother called from downstairs.

“Mai! Come down, your father has a surprise for you!”

Mai arrived in the kitchen a couple of seconds later.

“Look out the window.” Her father said.

Mai turned and gasped. A horse was standing in the paddocks near the house: A bright chestnut stallion.

“He’s all yours,” chorused her parents.

Rushing out to the horse and having him adore her was what Mai expected. But no. As soon as she stepped towards him he backed up, ears flat against his head. Every day she tried again. Stepping carefully, reaching cautiously. But he stepped back and back until she ran into the house, crying with despair. But she never gave up, always trying again. It had been a month now. He still wouldn’t let her near him. She tried again. Early in the morning, after school and in all her free time she was with him, trying and trying again. But it was hopeless, he was wild. She just tried again. She carried on.

Mai had woken up in the night to get a drink when she noticed something. Glancing out the window she saw a flickering light that could only mean one thing, *fire!* Mai flew downstairs. She had to warn someone, there were no phones in the house and her parents slept like logs. Those logs may be burnt logs if she didn’t do something quickly! Mai ran out to the paddock and saw that he was awake. She stepped towards him, her hand outstretched. He stepped forward. She stayed still. He walked up to her. She used the fence to boost herself on to his smooth back. Mai had no bridle so she used her legs to guide him forward. He was wild but obeyed her commands as if he had been doing it all his life.

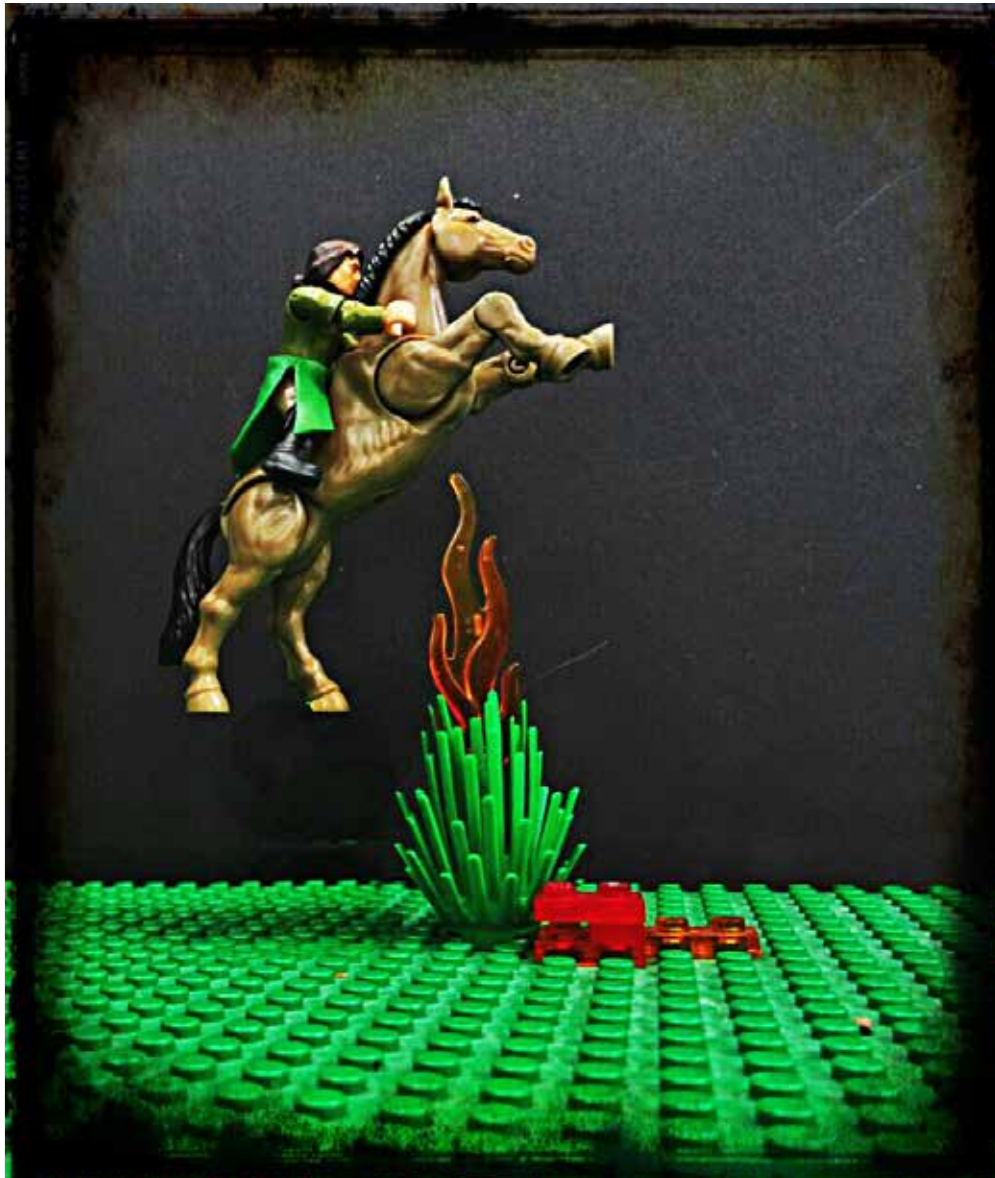
They galloped quickly towards the fire. They had to get to town, to warn the firemen. In between the town and them was a jump. Many horses had risked their lives to go over it. It was burning. There was no other way. Her horse rose up from underneath her. Mai felt the heat of flames licking menacingly. She stayed still, looking ahead until they reached the town. Galloping back to the barn, racing the flames, tired Mai out. She could barely clutch on to the ropey strands of mane. She could smell the smoke, hear the engines. They were slowing, she heard men shouting.

“The power line fell across, it probably flared up instantly!”

“*Flare,*” whispered Mai.

The next day Mai named her horse Flare, after what the man had said. She had tamed him, as the firemen had tamed the flames, succeeding in her goal. She was proud of how far he had come. Sometimes she thought that Flare felt the same way.

Nathan, 11, La Côte International School Aubonne





Lower Secondary



The Ambitious Beetle

Lucas, 11, La Côte International School Aubonne

A young little beetle with a nose like a needle,
Heard the hum of the bees from the top of a steeple.
He so wished for friendship, support and adventure,
To join in their lives and to become a member!

He wanted to travel from flower to flower,
And go pollinate them from hour to hour!
He said to himself "I'll just land on the nest!
They won't even notice, I'll pretend I'm a guest!"

So he leapt from the steeple and whoosh down he went,
But he had no idea that they'd sniff out his scent!

The bees came down buzzing and were frightened
and worried,

They were turning and swirling and around him
they scurried,

They touched him and sniffed him and crawled on
his head,

Then they gathered around him and here's what they said:

"We don't mean to be nasty, but here is the thing:

You don't have a proboscis or even a sting!

You just cannot hover, you'll land with a thud!

And your nose will get stuck in the crack of each bud!"

The beetle cried, "NO! I will not be beat!
I will do anything, I won't take defeat!
There's no doubt about it, I will be a BEE,
I'll rub out the T and the L and the E!

I won't take no for an answer! I'll sort out my wings,
I'll paint stripes on my bottom, I'll stick on a sting!
I will stretch out my nose, roll it up like a hose!
Dance from orchid to rose on the tips of my toes!"

And then a small little bee from the back of the crowd,
Said, "Give him a chance and he shall be allowed!
This beetle's ambitious, can't you all see?
If he proves he can do it then he COULD be a bee!"

The bees trained him, equipped him and put him
to the test,

And quickly he learnt how to do like the rest,
So the beetle was welcomed to live in the nest,
He was so ambitious he became one of the best!

Bee End! :)

Judge's thoughts: I absolutely LOVED this poem! I could see it as a picture book, and would be the first to buy it to read with my daughter. There are a couple of lines which are ever so slightly out of rhythm, but the vast majority of it is a funny and very well-accomplished piece of writing. Parts reminded me of Dr Seuss, and praise doesn't come much higher than that! Very well done, Lucas - I genuinely laughed out loud more than once.

Alexandre, 13, La Côte International School Aubonne



What is Ambition?

Beatrice, 12, Nord Anglia International School Hong Kong

A force barely there,
something which casts out despair.
Even against hopelessness and doubt,
Ambition fights back and forces them out.

It motivates us to go past what is enough,
and to keep moving forward even when it's tough.
Inspires us to pursue our dreams,
to go past what is normal and achieve the extremes.

Ambition tells us to keep going,
all by instinct, without us knowing.
It brings us to a place where every idea seems possible,
even ones which aren't entirely plausible.

It inspires us to do more, be more,
and shows us that adventures are just outside our door.
It presents us with new aspirations,
and pushes us to exceed expectations.

It takes our dreams and turns them to reality;
not a figment of imagination – a true actuality.
It tells us we can reach our dreams,
and that when we do, the possibilities are
bursting at the seams.

Judge's thoughts: One of the most difficult types of creative writing is a rhyming poem, but Beatrice makes it look almost easy. This is a great exploration of what ambition is, and aside from one or two lines which are very slightly out of rhythm with the rest of the poem, it is excellent work.

Bianca, 13, The British School Warsaw



Kamal

Christopher, 14, Dover Court International School Singapore

Kamal was no ordinary boy - he lived in a hut deep in the forest that fringed a little shanty old town in Srinagar, India. So on his 6th birthday when his wood-cutter father invited him to make the trip to town to sell off the pile of wood that he had collected, Kamal was quick to take it up. His excitement at the prospect of going to town was clearly palpable to all at home.

It was a long and arduous journey to town through thick forest that was fraught with danger and obstacles. After almost 3 hours of hard walking and traversing hillocks and rivers they were finally in town at daybreak. Kamal could hardly believe his eyes. Town- life was nothing like he had imagined. It was so pulsating with life and yet in some strange ways frightening.

As his father sat at the sidewalk peddling the firewood that he had carried on his back to this place, Kamal wandered about and his curiosity was pricked by an interesting sight. Inside a walled compound, from the gated entrance, he watched intently as a group of children sat under a makeshift shelter, reciting enthusiastically something he could not make out clearly.

It was their infectious enthusiasm that fascinated him. A man stood in front of them and he seemed to say things that made these children respond vocally and animatedly in a myriad ways. Kamal was enthralled by it all. He needed to be with them. However, the problem was he didn't have clothes and they did: for the first time he felt shame. Little did he know that this was the town's elementary school.

On his way back home he enquired of his dad if he might

join those children. His father taken aback by his query, replied in an alarmed tone that he could not afford it. Kamal knew, sensed, that it was far more than just that. Nevertheless he was determined to watch and learn from a distance. Later his mother told him what school was all about and how you learnt things. Kamal knew that was exactly what he wanted - to learn. Learn everything... nothing was going to get in his way. Not poverty, not the journey, not the discriminations nor the stigma of being an 'untouchable'.

That resolve saw him standing naked outside at the gate, rain or shine. He was intrigued. Every morning without fail, he stood at the gate listening to every word the teacher taught. It did not take long for the teacher, an elderly dhoti-clad gentleman to notice that lonesome figure at the gate, who seemed to pay attention to him far more than any pupil in his class. He wanted to ask that child why he stood there. When he eventually did, the boy's answer was so profound that the teacher offered to pay for his fees.

That meeting between them on a fateful morning would eventually change the course of the boy's life and that of India itself.

Kamal went on to learn and excel in every grade. He moved to the city on scholarship and eventually graduated with top honours. Such was his passion and charisma that everyone who met him was astounded by his wisdom. Years later, he was appointed to the highest office- the Presidency.

Judge's thoughts: Chris painted a very clear picture with his writing - I could see the children through Kamal's eyes, and clearly picture Kamal himself standing outside the school. The piece nicely builds from Kamal's initial excitement about joining his father in town right up to him becoming president, but never gets bogged down in needless detail. This was not a story I was aware of, and I felt genuinely moved by it - a testament to the writing. Excellent work.

Omnia, 11, Compass International School Doha, Madinat Khalifa



Patch-work

Courtney, 12, Nord Anglia International School Shanghai Pudong

As she watches her mother sew a square of fabric onto other squares of fabric, she is fascinated. Her eyes widen. She stares. The corners of her mouth twitch- will this become a new obsession? Only time shall tell...

A day later, it is all she could think about. Cardboard templates, cotton thread, fabric patterns. They flash before her eyes. Will they combine to make a blanket? A bag? She is uncertain; the only thing she knows is that she is obsessed.

After yet another day of patch-work creations whizzing back and forth through her mind, she makes a decision. She goes to her mother. She asks if she could be taught the art (the ever so mystical art) of patch-working. Her mother agrees. She is taught how to hold the fabric. She is taught how to cut the templates. *Slowly now*, she is told, *until you get more practice*. So she goes slowly. Patch-work is still all she could think about.

She spends hours sewing. She sews and she sews and she sews and she sews. The stitches cross over each other; the fabric fraying under her touch. *Slowly now*, she sighs, *you need more practice*. Frustration is not a stranger to her. She refuses to stop sewing. She must practice.

Hours become days. She sews and she sews and she sews and she sews. She pricks herself countless times; the fabric shears heavy in her hand. She grits her teeth. *Slowly now*, she mutters, *you need much more practice*. The needle draws blood. She wonders to herself: how long did her mother take to get that good at patch-work?

Days become weeks, and weeks become months. She sews and she sews and she sews. The stitches are still wonky; the fabric is unevenly cut. *Slowly now*, she tells herself, *until you get more practice*.

Months become years. She sews and she sews and she sews and she sews. Her stitches are near impeccable; the fabric shears now almost an extension of her arm. *No more need to go slowly now*, she knows, *she has enough practice*. This is where her obsession takes her.

Years become decades. Her mother passes, a patch-work quilt draped over her shoulders. She mourns, throwing her sadness into her sewing. Her stitches have not diminished in quality; the fabrics feel familiar to her touch. *It's okay to go slowly now*, she thinks; *you can never have enough practice*. She still wonders exactly how long her mother took to be so good at patch-work.

Days become weeks, weeks become months, and months become years. She has her own daughter now. The child watches her sew, eyes widening and the corners of her mouth twitching. Will this become an obsession? Only time shall tell...

Slowly now, she tells her child, *until you get more practice*.

Judge's thoughts: This was a genuine joy to read – a beautifully-written piece which managed to pack a lifetime of emotion into less than 500 words. I had to read the story twice to try to pick out anything to comment on, as I was pulled so fully into it on the first read that I almost didn't notice the writing. I wasn't reading a story, I was watching a girl sew (and sew and sew)! If she chooses, I think Courtney could have a real future as a writer. Exceptionally well done!

Pavel, 17, The British International School Bratislava



Pages Turned

Naomi, 12, The British International School of Charlotte

Anne Frank; a young girl; a jew; a girl who was curious about the world. She was just like you and me, but the way she was living couldn't be more different, in the secret Annexe, confined from all the outside world, yet she put a smile on her face and survived two years hiding underground.

Below is a letter from Kitty, Anne's diary, to Anne telling her about what happened once Anne was taken away.

My Dearest Anne,

No longer can I see your face; no longer can I feel your tender dainty hands turning my pages; no longer can I hear you whispering your thoughts to me breaking the silence of the cold secluded night.

I haven't seen you since that warm, appalling day in August 1944. All I can remember is loud stomping and breaking glass. But still at night I can hear your screams, your desperate cries fading off into the distance, getting quieter and quieter.

Then Silence...

I've been waiting to hear your voice again and to feel your smooth gentle hands turn my pages and stroke my cover.

Sometime later, I felt two hands pick me up. You were finally going to turn my pages again and whisper your thoughts to me and I would see your smiling face-the face of a young girl, a face of a girl I had been waiting for for so long! Alas, they weren't your hands, the hands were larger and rough, I could feel several wrinkles crawling across my pages.

It was Miep-Miep Gies. She found me, with my pages torn and my body lying motionless on the floor. I remember her picking me up, I hadn't felt someone pick me up in God knows how long.

I stood still waiting. What was she doing with me?

I could feel several hands running down my spine. I have never felt so violated. Wherever you are, come back please I beg you. I will give up all my pages, all my ink and all the thoughts you said to me just to see you again.

When the running of the hands ceased, I was relieved to be in the hands of another Frank. It was your father Otto. I must confess, he isn't quite the way you described him in your final entries. He was gentle with me, he slowly turned the pages without tearing them or smearing my ink.

All I could hear was murmuring and whispers. "No more" I could hear a woman say and "Anne and Margot". You must be out there somewhere. Will you ever come to me? Do I mean anything to you? I've waited for years yet you still haven't returned. Every night my tears take away one more letter of your thoughts.

To this day I feel more and more hands touching me and can see more and more faces staring down at me. But none of those faces are yours Anne.

Please return. I miss you dearly,

Yours,
Kitty

Judge's thoughts: While this was a very interesting concept, with something like this there's always a danger it just won't work. Fortunately, Naomi handled it perfectly, packing the letter with real emotion – the line, "I will give up all my pages, all my ink..." almost made me cry! I was so impressed by this entry I actually made a point of reading it again after reading all the others, so I could enjoy it all over again.

Larissa, 17, International College Spain



Malala of Mingora

Anna, 11, St Andrews International School Bangkok

In 1997, Mingora, Pakistan- the big issue was Talibanisation: dancing was not permitted and neither were movies, music, education for women and a long list to follow. The picturesque valley was about to crumble and so was the life of a young girl...

Malala Yousafzai was born on the 12th of July to Toor Pekai and Ziauddin Yousafzai. Her name is after a historic hero of Pakistan: "Malalai of Maiwand"

As a young girl she became a proponent for girl's education (banned over the age of 4 in Pakistan) and attended a school founded by her father: "Kushal Primary school and College".

Swat valley was a popular tourist site; however-the area began to change as the Taliban tried to take control. By September 2008 the Taliban had blasted 400 girls schools in Peshawar! Even though Malala's father had become a renowned spokesperson around Swat-their school was one of the few schools that remained unscathed.

In early 2009, Malala developed a dream of becoming a politician in Pakistan. With a growing platform-the premature activist was nominated for the international children's peace prize and was the winner of Pakistan's Nobel peace prize in the same year!

All of her work in protesting and encouraging others to learn was put to stake when she received a death threat from Taliban members against her. The Taliban had risen to power again.

On October 12 2012, while travelling home from school, a man boarded the same bus as Malala and demanded to know where she was. Everyone looked at her-revealing her location. A moment later, Malala was shot.

Immediately, Malala was taken to a hospital but the care in Pakistan was quite primitive. She was then transferred to Birmingham, where she was put into a medically induced coma and had numerous operations. The doctors at the hospital also discovered a damaged facial nerve in the left side of Malala's face-this was why her face became completely numb.

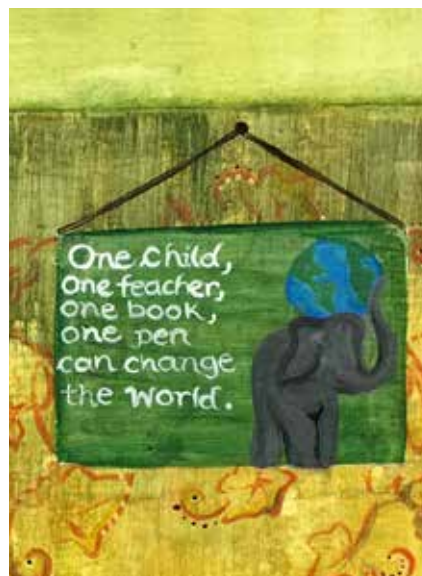
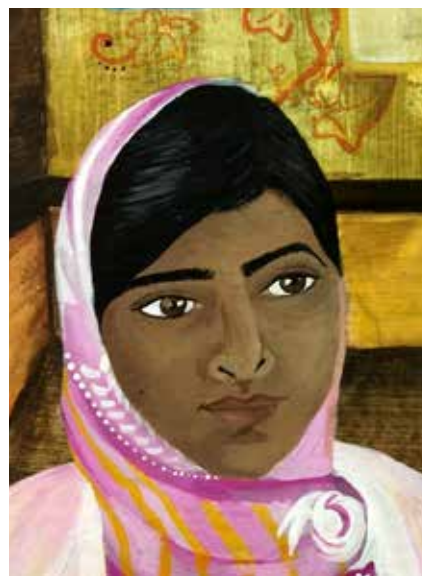
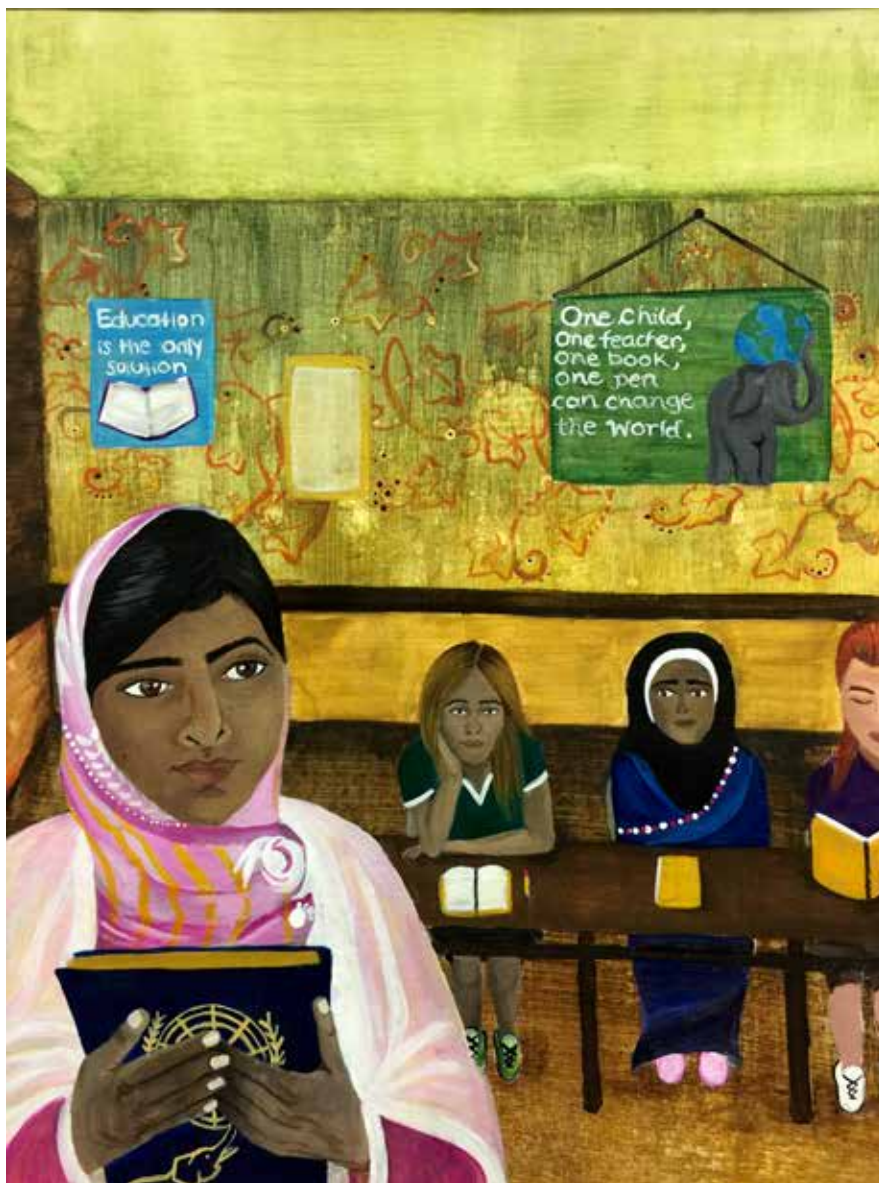
She had to undergo additional major operations to repair her mutilated facial nerve in which bits and pieces were picked up around the small area of her blasted skull.

This terrible act was recognised all around the world. The lives of many people had been alerted to things happening around them by this disastrous occurrence. Recently, Malala gave a speech-in which she had mentioned that she was not speaking for her but all of the 60 million girls who had been silenced. She sent out a message to all of them-saying that they should get up and join her in the fight for girl's education. A stirring sentence from her was: "I am Malala. My world has changed but I have not."

This made people realise that despite the bullet that wounded her-she was not silenced but was motivated to fight even harder.

Currently, Malala is in Birmingham unable to return to Pakistan because of danger and she *still* fights for those without a voice so that *every child* has the right to have quality education.

Charlotte, 18, North Broward Preparatory School



Judge's thoughts: *I have chosen this piece by Charlotte as it really spoke to me, for both its conceptual and technical brilliance. The style of work reminds me of artwork I see published in books now, with its sophisticated use of depth and brushwork. The message that Malala sends is inspiring and profound, and I feel this image captures that.*

The Sun

Alba, 11, International College Spain

At some points of the day, It's impossible to make anything better, and this was one of them. I sat down, on thin air, contemplating this, calmly. Then a deep breeze of wind flew past me, making me shiver because of the change in temperature, pushing me forward until I lost sight of that hill. I came back to myself, and I started thinking of my true dream, my goal, what I wanted to do. Ever since I was born, I wished for being able to be close to the sun, touch it, admire it's beautiful colors closely, and live with him. Seeing it from the cloud's point of view wasn't good enough.

When I woke up the next day, I found an old cloud staring at me. His colors were already worn out because of his age, and he was all gray on the edges, dark black in the inside. Then, with his magical, dreamy voice, he said that he could help me reach my goal. He raised his wand and tapped my head, and he started reciting the spell. I said it slowly and as soon as I finished, I started floating, going up until there was nothing I could see. I started spinning, so quickly, that soon I found myself dizzy and wanting to puke. Then, I just disappeared into thin air and when I opened my eyes again, I stared screaming.

In front of me lay a massive ball of fire. My skin started prickling and turning red. I tried as hard as I could to pull myself out of this place, but I got pulled back. I searched hopelessly, and then, out of nowhere, a gigantic rocket

jumped into my view. I remembered those, humans used them. I was happy to see that humans could survive here, but I definitely couldn't, practically all of my surface had turned red. When I looked at the rocket again, I saw it had advanced, and was now heading straight at me. I tried skidding a bit sideways, but I was totally paralyzed, my skin aching to death.

It kept advancing, always with the front pointing straight at my nose. When it was meters away, the wind that the plane had provoked, threw me to the side, and I was so relieved. I let out a gasp of air as I slowly wrapped my hands around a metal bar hanging out of the rocket. Wind blew on my face, and I had to close my eyes to stop them from watering. As time passed, the air cooled down, and I could finally breath normally, without having to feel the pain. My skin started turning back, and I hoped no one would notice.

I finally saw a little blue ball in the distance. A smile popped onto my face as I saw my brothers racing through the sky. I gently let go of the rocket, and I was left in mid air. They didn't even notice I was there, and I watched as the sun went up again. I had spent a whole day hanging on to a rocket. I saw the sun's beautiful colors again, and I realized that it was worse up close, much worse. I promised myself I wouldn't do something as dumb again.

Maia, 12, Compass International School Doha, Madinat Khalifa



Realise Real Eyes

Bella, 12, Nord Broward
Preparatory School

ambition
that's what i see
when i look
into your eyes
someone
craving
the attention
they deserve
inspired
to help people
motivated
to make a difference
in this world
striving
to be a reason
for happiness
in life
longing
to be able to save
just one person

Delia, 14, British International
School of Houston



The Fear of Simplicity

Akhila, 14, Nord Anglia
International School Al Khor

Sae, 16,
The British School Warsaw

How long will it take
for them to feel how I feel?
To acknowledge the torment
of everlasting simplicity.

I long to be art and poems -
not artists and poets.
To be love and wonder -
not loved and wondrous.

How long will it take
for them to finally see
that I don't want to be a star -
but rather the whole galaxy.



Medical Mayhem

Cara, 12, British International School of Houston

I hate being the one to tell them that they aren't going to make it. I could tell just by looking at him while he was wheeled in on a stretcher, that there was something special about him, but I had no idea how his arrival would change me.

They told me he was hit by two cars coming from opposite directions. Both were most likely planned. To say I was furious would be an understatement. The boy was only young, who would want to hurt him?

I took the handles of the stretcher. Carefully, I rushed him down the never-ending white corridor to an x-ray room so that I could safely assess what needed to be done. As soon as I looked at the x-ray scan I instinctively knew something was wrong. I had never seen this before but it looked like a giant bruise covering his brain. I had no idea how I could possibly help him but I knew I had to try.

I had him put in a special ward with a nurse who would look after him all night whilst I researched more about his symptoms. I was up all night, researching what it could possibly be. It wasn't until I read an article about a man's head injury that I realised what it was. The boy had a Subdural Hematoma. According to research, a Subdural Hematoma occurs when the brain gets shaken severely, causing a massive bruise to form. Since the brain is fragile, I would need to be extremely careful. One false move could cause permanent brain damage.

The next day, I rushed back to the hospital, determined to show my colleagues what I'd discovered. Every one of them told me that it was pointless and practically impossible. My boss had a similar response.

How did I believe that I could manage to save him? I decided to go say goodbye to the little boy before I left. As I got closer to his room I wondered how he felt. It must be awful hearing us all talk but not fully understanding. Hoping that what we say isn't what he fears to be the worst. He was lying there wide awake. Fresh tears were rolling down his face and falling delicately around him before the duvet soaked them up. I went over to him and knelt down.

I asked how he felt and he whimpered in response. He'd heard us talking and was aware that I couldn't save him. I had failed him. That was when I saw the quote on his bedside table, 'believe you can do anything. Achieve the unthinkable.' I was instantly inspired. They were wrong about me... about him. I sprinted quickly in the direction of my office and immediately scheduled an appointment for his surgery. He shall survive.

I'm sitting on the floor of a brightly coloured waiting room. I am about to meet the boy who changed everything. I am waiting for him to come out through the double doors. I'm

still watching those double doors when finally, one opens and a little boy with shiny blonde hair and eyes the colour of the sky walks out, smiling triumphantly. He runs over to me and hugs me, I laugh before hugging back. I'm so glad he survived.

Karla, 13, The British School Warsaw



Thank You Ziauddin

Jakub, 11, The British International School Bratislava

When a daughter arrived instead of a most-wanted son, was Ziauddin distraught? No, he was thankful. When he was weighed down by debt did he let himself collapse? No, he stayed strong. When his daughter won the Nobel Prize, did he boast? No, he was humble. When his school was in 'ruins' did he let himself be 'buried'? No, he stayed ambitious.

This incredible man has gone through numerous tough and unexpected ordeals. One of those horrible ordeals occurred on the 9th of November 2012 when his only daughter was shot in the forehead by the gruesome, bloodthirsty Taliban who disapproved of girls being educated. Malala spent many weeks in intensive care and some extra time in rehabilitation. Thankfully she survived and goes to school happily today. Additionally, he received many death threats during his years in the Swat valley where the Taliban had absolute control. Bravely risking his life many times, opposed to the Taliban in many ways (TV campaigns, formal debates etc.) he fought for girls rights but, when Malala was shot all this had to stop because the whole Yousafzai family was forced to move to the bustling streets of Birmingham, U.K.

What if Ziauddin was not the courageous, ambitious and humble man that the world knows and admires? Most of us would have crumbled under the weight of his life. Did he crumble? No he stayed ambitious and that's why all the hard work paid off. If you have ambitions; follow them. And Ziauddin had many.

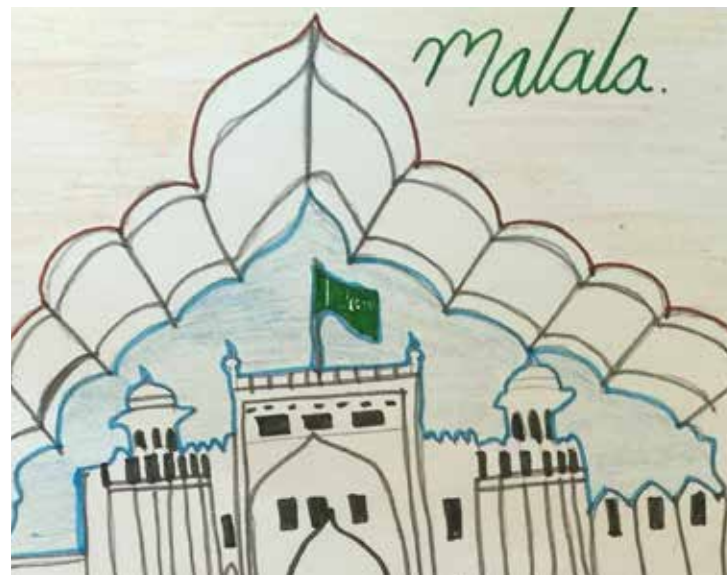
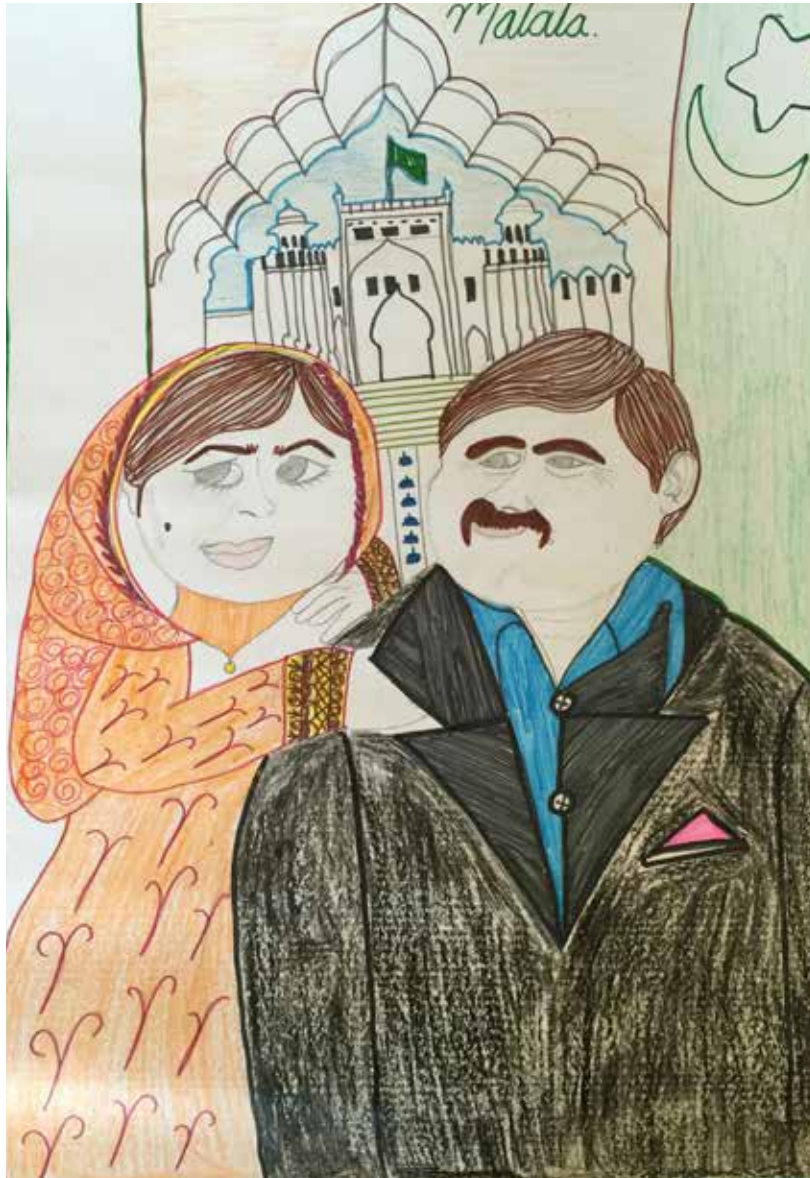
Naturally, Ziauddin tirelessly pursued them. He wanted to make all the world's wrongs right. Already, he has stood up and said what he thought was correct which has had a great positive impact on the world's politics. Furthermore, he motivated his daughter to be as ambitious as him, which is a great thing. That's why Malala is as famous as he is; that's why she has won the Nobel Prize and is the girl she is today.

Faith

The people of Pakistan are very faithful people, Ziauddin being no exception. He believes that Allah has guided him through his biggest problems. As he has coped with problems so well, it makes perfect sense. When the people in Swat get caught in their houses while there is an earthquake, they pray. If they get into financial trouble, they pray. Ziauddin is no exception. When Malala was shot, Ziauddin and Thorpekai (Malala's Mother) prayed and prayed, requesting a miracle from Allah; and a miracle occurred.

Thank you on behalf of the world Ziauddin Yousafzai for all the good you have done as loving husband and supportive father. I'm stunned seeing your heroic actions; I stand speechless when I discover how faithful and courageous you are. Above all, thank you for being the ambitious man that people look up to as a hero.

Catalina, 10, Compass International School Doha, Rayyan



The Story About The Theme

Jia, 13, British International School of Washington

The theme given was “Be Ambitious”. I stared at those two words at the top of my page and thoughts started to race through my head. What should my story be about? Should it be about a person who was ambitious? Or maybe just about how something can be ambitious? What should the name of the character be? What obstacles did she have to overcome? What was she trying to achieve ultimately? What style of writing should I use?

At that point in time, the first thing that came to my head was to use a flashback. However, using a flashback was something I did in every other story, I was determined to make this one unique. I continued to think about the technique that I wanted to use.

It occurred to me that I had not even considered writing it like a biography for someone else. As I had never given that a shot before, I thought to myself, this is going to be a long but interesting journey.

I started to write about a girl named Stella who was physically disabled; she was born without any legs. However, her lifelong dream was to be able to go mountain climbing one day. I wrote about her journey to getting to the top of that mountain: having to have prosthetic legs fit in, going through physiotherapy to adapt to them. Subsequently, she began training for her mountain climbing trip and eventually, she found herself on top of that mountain.

After finishing my first draft, I read through it and smiled to myself thinking, I did it! I handed it to my sister to ask for her opinion. After reading through, her first question was, “What style are you trying to write this in?”

With a smile, I responded, “I’m writing it as a biography.”

She handed it back to me and said, “It is a mixture of a flashback and a biography. You need to make your biography more formal, perhaps providing proper dates would be a first step.”

Disappointed, I took my work back and set out to fix it. Every time I finished it, I would look back over it and find some fault in it. When I thought it was perfect, I handed it to my sister for the second time. As she read it, I could see a smile slowly form on her face. She nodded and asked, “I think it’s great! What do you think?”

I smiled. I felt a sense of excitement and relief rush through me because all my hard work finally paid off. I was also glad because I had found a new fact about myself: I am able to write in different styles when I want to. It also taught me that being ambitious can come in handy. However, to do so, it requires you to step out of your comfort zone and never get too comfortable in any position you are in.

Khyrz, 12, Compass International School Doha, Madinat Khalifa



Tony's Lift Off

John, 12, The British School of Beijing Shunyi

"You will never amount to anything" my teacher spits; projectiles of saliva land directly onto my whimpering face. "You disgust me" he continues, "you fail to pass your tests- all of them, you seldom hand in homework and you disrespect me!"

Great, the last thing I need is another teacher furious at me. They all hate me ... well, except for Mr Frillock. Who's he you inquire? Well, I'm glad you asked, as he happens to be the head of Science (my favourite subject). Most kids my age loathe Science, but I love it. Physics, Chemistry, Biology... and Astronomy, I can hardly tell you how much I love Astronomy. There is so much to ponder upon, in fact, you'll often find me discussing Astronomy with Mr Frillock (often in my own insufficient free time). I'm not exactly the Teacher's pet, quite the opposite actually, but Mr Frillock says I've got potential. I sure hope he's right.

"TONY!" I groan as I get out of bed, maybe this is where the term 'rude awakening' comes from.

"What is it, Ralph?"

I was having one of those flashbacks again!" I grumble.

Ralph gives me a look that could cut through steel, his secret code for: 'Get serious, this is important'. I've experienced the joy of witnessing that look innumerable times, and trust me, it normally doesn't end well.

"Tony," Ralph uttered "We're heading towards the asteroid field, I just wanted to let you know." And with that he swivels around and makes his way to the cockpit. I allow myself a smile, as I've just been reminded how I've proven the teachers wrong.

Tony Smith, successful astronaut, reporting for duty!

I advance forward to join Ralph, as the sight of asteroids is something not to be missed. Not because it's a particularly beautiful sight, but they are highly dangerous - lethal if they hit the ship.

Wait! I think I heard a sound... no I definitely heard something.

"Ralph? What was that?" No reply. Wow, he's ignoring me, I must have somehow ticked him off... again. I reach the doors of the cockpit and hear a swirling sound, like a giant vacuum cleaner. Uh oh, that only means one thing. I burst inside, only to find a lifeless Ralph crushed by a giant asteroid. I start to feel dizzy, with my vision getting blurred and my feet stumbling over. I collapse to the floor and everything goes black.

I'm awoken, for the second time today, by a buzzing sound emitted from the speaker. My eyes flutter open as I try to make sense of what just happened.

"Ralph" a raspy voice mutters through the speaker. I rush over (well, as best as I can) and respond to the near broken piece of technology.

"It's Tony... Ralph's dead", I reply, my voice as shaky as a toddler trying to walk "Please tell me what to do" but to my horror the speaker shuts down.

I've got to land this ship myself. I stagger over to the controls and fumble around with them. I just can't concentrate! But then I picture Mr Frillock's face, my parents' kind words... and the teachers who gave me the motivation to thrive.

I carefully direct the ship onto the nearest planet.

Mars.

That'll do.

It's hero time...

Jakub, 11, The British International School Bratislava



Judge's thoughts: *This piece of artwork for Tony's Lift Off is utterly incredible and so unique! Jakub has a very obvious talent and understanding of perspective and highly intelligent creativity. It looks like a picture I would see in a graphic novel or a shot from an 80's black and white science fiction film. Brilliant.*

Toni Kurz

Josef, 11, The English International School Prague

It is surprising what small things can do. A human could walk through impassable territory or a butterfly fly 5000 miles. Small things however can also be dangerous and it was on that troublesome day on the 18 of July 1936, that this was proved.

The two Bavarians, Toni Kurz and Andi Hinterstoisser, set off to fulfil their dream in the name of the Fatherland to climb the last obstacle in the alps, the North face of the Eiger. Their dream would soon become a nightmare that would be known throughout the climbing world.

A third of the way up the mountain and the climb began to get harder. They had met up with two Austrians, Willi Angerer and Edi Rainer, who were also racing towards the summit. The two pairs joined together and decided to climb to the summit together. All however didn't go as planned. Rivalries began to develop between the climbers and mistrust governed all their actions.

However, by the time the climbers had reached the notorious Rote Fluh, the mood had begun to change and a sense of friendship had taken over. Previous climbers had never made it this far and so there was little to guide the two pairs as they climbed further into unknown territory. However, they managed to cheat the guards of the key to the heart of the Eiger by giving their greatest rock climber, Hinterstoisser a lot of slack on the rope to make it easier for him to climb. If he failed, he would take a massive swing and would be hanging below his companions. But all rejoiced when he made it and they followed him over one by one.

Once the climbers had conquered the Rote Fluh, they felt that the mountain had already been climbed. This was a great boost for the climbers for they believed that nothing as challenging as this little, but deceptive, piece of fine smooth rock was above them. Or so they thought.

It was here the climbers made a grave mistake. The men were only thinking ahead, and they didn't leave their rope on the Rote Fluh. This critical mistake would block Toni's way back to Bavaria.

Further up the ice Toni noticed that Willi was slowing down every step he made and he began to wonder if he was healthy or even fit enough to climb. He had been hit by a rock the size of a man's fist in the head and he had a cough getting worse and worse.

That night on the ice shelf Toni had some horrible ideas. He was thinking of leaving Angerer on the shelf or even more horrific – killing him. The next morning, Toni and Andi left Rainer and Angerer to their fate and simply climbed up further towards the peak. But their moves loosened rocks which fell on the pair below. Suddenly, Angerer heard the rocks flying by and caught Toni and Andi trying to escape. The pair realised their mistake and abseiled back to the others to help them.

Toni felt terrible. His greed, ambition and carelessness had just betrayed two people who he shared a common goal with. From then on the race to climb the North face of the Eiger was over and a battle for survival as a team had begun...

Amir, 10, Compass International School Doha, Rayyan



A Dream Becoming True

Louis, Year 10, Collège Champittet Pully

Jonas was nineteen years old. He lived in New York City, and studied journalism in CUNY. He absolutely loved walking in a balance on a wire because it isolated him from the rest of the world, he could take time to think.

Walking above the Niagara Falls was Jonas' biggest dream, but he actually didn't dare try it because his friends persisted telling him he would never be able to do it.

But one day, he decided he was going to do it.

From this day, everyday, after school finished, he harshly trained on the wire he tightened between two trees in the garden. He fell a lot, but it was worth it.

Little by little, the young man started to walk in balance on longer distances, and his friends understood how determined he was, and began helping Jonas so that he reached his dream.

One day Jonas settled the wire between his house and the one on the other side of the street. That needed much more concentration than when he used to walk on a cable one meter high. So he closed his eyes and cleared his mind. Then he opened his eyes and focused on the end of the line.

After a long, deep breath, he did the first step. Then a second one, and a third one. He continued to move forward, slowly but confidently. Jonas smiled. Maybe, if he trained enough, he might be able to achieve his dream. Then suddenly the wire shook so violently that he almost fell on the road, but fortunately he managed to stay on the line. Jonas' mother got so scared that she screamed. He

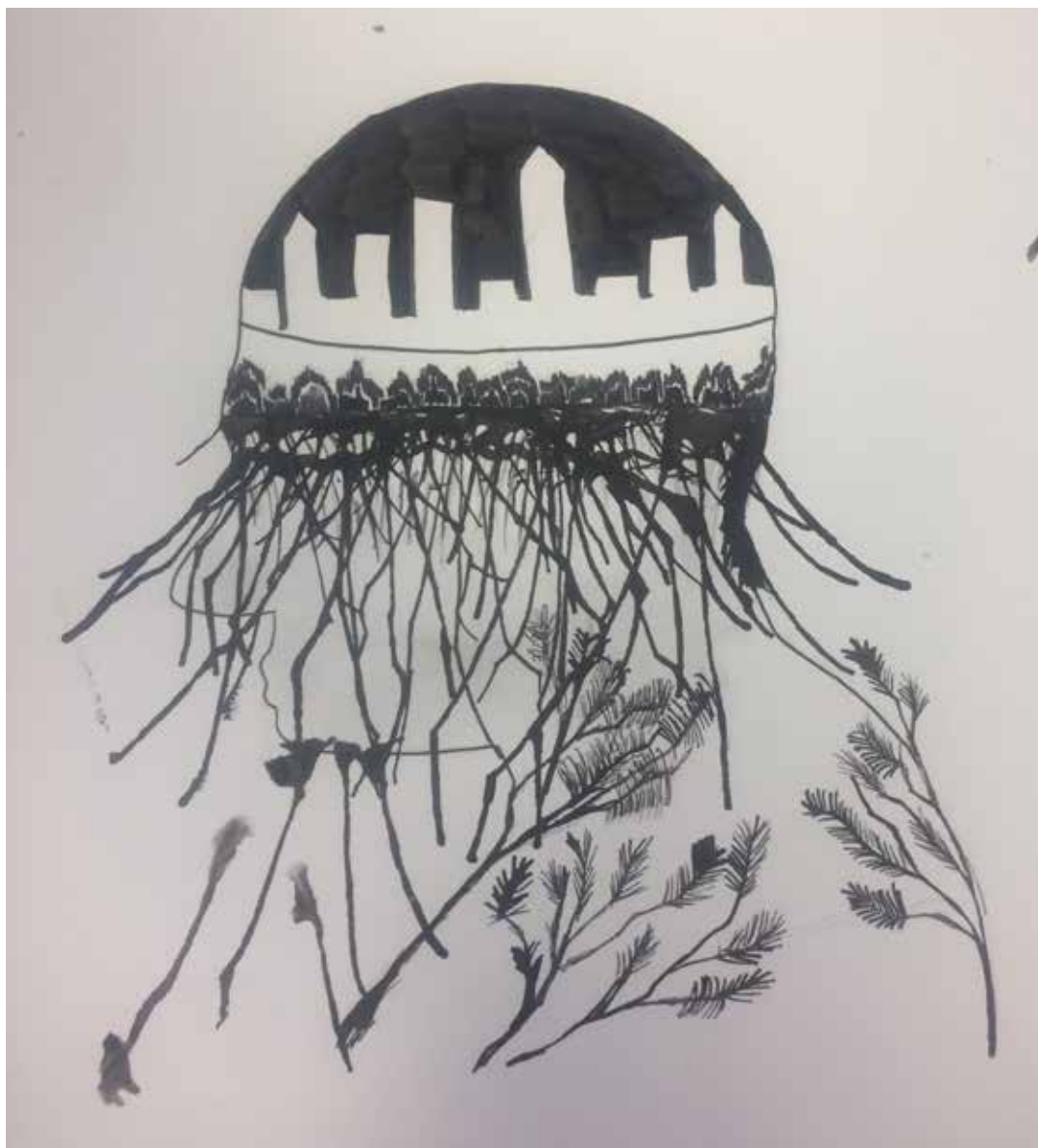
looked at her as to say « don't worry, I'm ok ». She nodded, and the tightrope walker brought his attention back to the line. He took a long breath, and continued, without any problems, until the end of the wire. Jonas' friends and mother applauded loudly, and he blushed. But he knew he still had a lot of training ahead of him.

One year later, Jonas progressed a lot, and his friends and himself settled the D-Day on Monday 23rd of November 2012, which meant he had two months to prepare himself. So he trained every day with his friends in the park, walking on very long distance, they simulated wind by shaking slightly the wire, but Jonas was so determined that he resisted. The group that was assisting Jonas was really impressed, and they were right to be!

The D-Day arrived and finally the funambulist was ready. They took the car at 7:00 from New York to Niagara, which was quite a long journey. When they finally arrived, it was 13:30. The sun was high in the sky, which was cloudless and deep blue. They got out of the car with all the equipment, and within one or two hours, the cable was settled between the Canadian and the American side of the Niagara Falls. Jonas dressed up, and looked at the wire. He moved forward up to the wire. One of his friends was filming. Jonas took a long breath, and did the first step. The wire didn't shake.

Then a second step. Fifteen minutes later, Jonas's foot touched the ground. He made it.

Serena, 14, British International School of Houston



The Ant

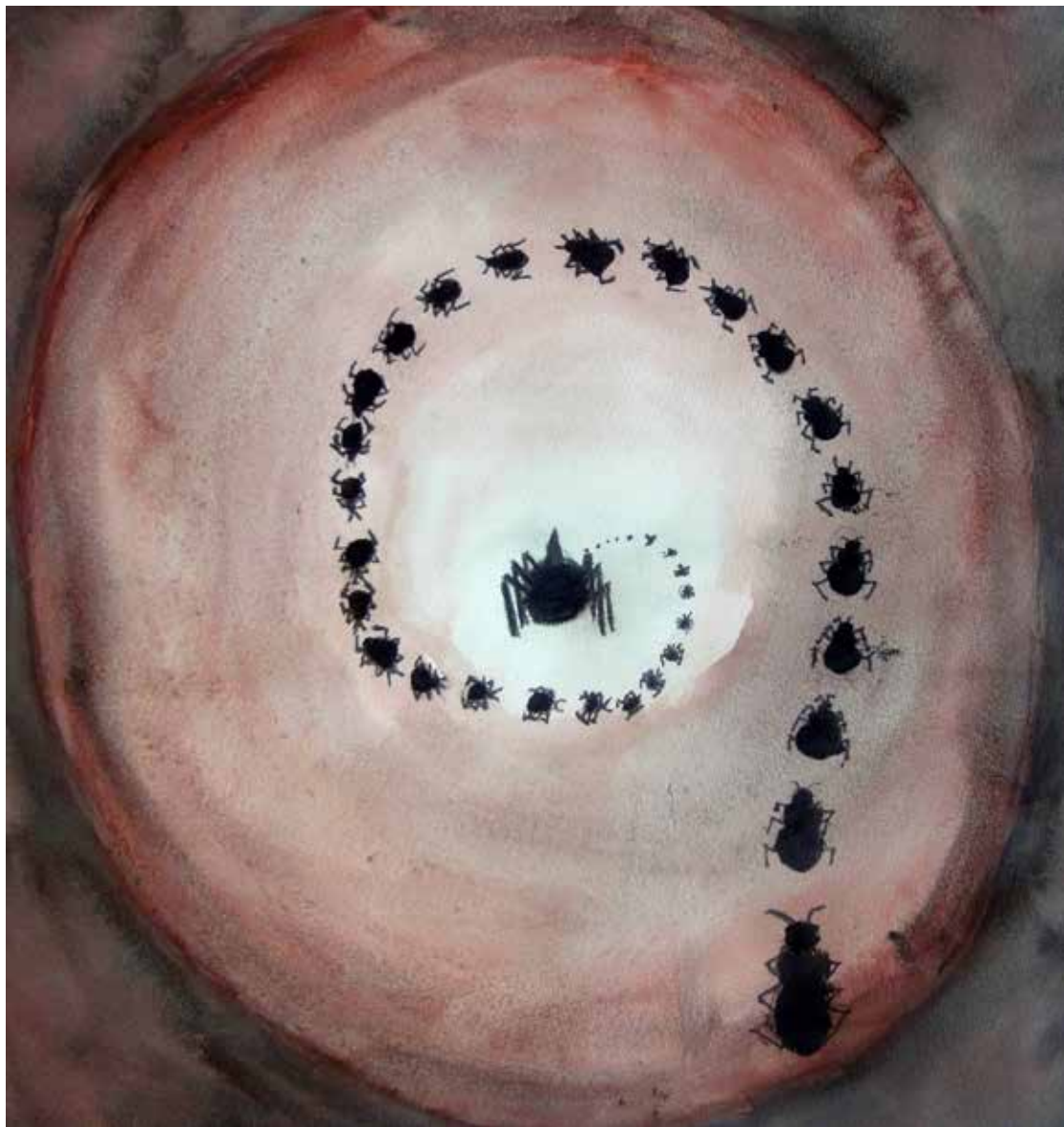
Nukaiya, 12, Compass International School Doha, Madinat Khalifa

The ambition for a human is diverse and complicated, full of never-ending dreams and hopes. However the ambition for say, an ant is simple, simple but bloody and horrific. We tend to leave these animals out of our conscience, believing they are just one of trillions of their species, which they are; but does that not mean that don't they get a story of their fruitful battles?

Walking, always walking, each step taking them closer to their necessary nourishment. Or is it? They don't know, the only thing dragging them on is their acute sense of survival, leading them like a flicker of light in the dark. They play a serious game of follow the leader, creating a path for the one behind to mimic, and for the one behind him to follow. They walk in single file nothing piercing their stripe. A peaceful urgency surrounds them until, the beast. A beast with long gangly legs which supported the gross mass of its black body. A beast with black antennae and a pair of wet, black eyes, bulging out its forehead. A beetle. It broke the perfect assembly, scattering the ants and sending flashing warning signs through the ants' brains. They went into flee mode, running at frightening speed, struggling over small sticks which the beetle only stepped over. This was it for them, no more. But they still pursued their survival, a charging race of large and small, this couldn't last forever. The beetle quickened its scamper and opened its cave-like maw and devoured one whole, then another, then some more.

The beetle filled the hollow in its stomach and continued on its winding path. The ants were unfathomed, if only slightly on their toes. They resumed their trek, one large step for ant, one miniscule step for man-kind. A sweet scent hung in the air, emitting clues of food between pangs of pine. The forest floor is a battlefield which hides behind our stupidity and self-centeredness. Why do the ants do this? Why do they pursue? Because they need to, it's as simple as that. Their strides quicken as the scent grows richer. Over a log and around a pond, the food comes into view. It's a massive, yellow, curved piece of something, smelling repulsively like rancid sour cream and onions. But so beautiful, oh so beautiful. An empty rumble beat at their stomachs. However, their source doesn't end there, these magnificent things continue through a mountainous green cylindrical tube buried in the tall blades of grass. Excitement pounds through their bodies like a drum, the wild within erupts and heat saturates their bodies. The line becomes a scatter, a brutish unorganized mess. They violently rip off the flesh of the potato chip, and fling it on to their head. Each one carrying a piece of heaven. And then they walk back to their nest. And then they do it again, and then they do it again, and again.

Edward, 13, La Côte International School Aubonne



What if?

Selina, 13, The British School of Guangzhou

Take a look outside your window. Even better yet, take a walk outside. Look around. Do you see those sporting a thick wooden coat, topped off with a hat of green, gold or red? Or perhaps wild crazy hair? Trees are all around us--whether in the countryside or huge urban cities. I'm not going to go into the science of their importance to our world, but this particular tree, it's important in an entirely different way.

What if I told you that there is this one solitary tree in a place unknown to man, as old as time itself. A tree who has never felt the eternal heat, light and laughter of Summer; experienced the changing of its leaves as they gradually dance away, carried by the cool breeze of Autumn; battled through the bitter, harsh cold of Winter as tiny, beautiful white fairies paint their masterpiece; or encountered the fresh scent of flowers, grass, and drizzle of rain that marked the arrival of Spring. None of that. No animals to keep it company either.

It might seem like a lonely life, but it is accompanied by so much more. Each of its leaves represents one of us. The fallen have... 'fell' and those that have entwined together are the people that you meet, the people in your life--that's not the biggest importance it holds though. No. Not even close.

Imagine, just imagine. If I told you that each of its flowers is a dream? An ambition? A wish?

It has seen every one of our dreams, our ambitions: as a child and adult--even our dying wish. It's seen every one of our actions to achieve our goals--watched over your every move. Those it deems worthy will blossom into fruits of gold and silver. It helps each and every one of us the only way it can, tries its hardest to keep the flower from falling before you've had time to prove yourself. It can't give up. It desperately hopes you won't either. That's what ambition is all about. Never giving up, even when failure faces you dead on. How are you to know if you don't try, especially when there's someone--something that won't give up on you?

What if?

What if a leaf falls, but it's flower continues to flourish, but it's fruit still thrives on? What if a perfect fruit falls off even though all the leaves supporting it stay on? What if your fruit falls? What if you were actually able to place it back? What if you need to do everything all over again--prove yourself again?

What if?

Ana, 14, International College Spain



Be Ambitious

Simon, 13, British International School of Boston

Night fell. Not a winter evening, but a truly pitch black night. I was walking home to my shack of an apartment from my job at the construction site. I was tired as hell, working until I could not move a finger. It was truly a hard day's night, and I had been working like a dog. I remembered the good old days. Before the 90s. Back when I was a person, not a slave in the hands of a foreign society. I was a celebrity in the USSR, a singer that played all day long on the radio, no problems with food or money. But the lure of America was too much. In the turbulent 90s my world fell apart. The influx of American pop culture, the financial crisis, the breakup of the USSR, everything was against me. Following the Neil Diamond song, I came to America. I hung on to a dream, on the boats and on the planes, I came to America. But as soon as my life here started, the Beatles song 'Back in the USSR' rang around and around in my head.

My life was a dull merry-go-round of bills, labor, and more bills. I was in debt, hungry, cold and defeated. I looked into the windshield of a car, and saw a man who had no dreams, no joys, no nothing. I saw a shell of a man. I finally got to my apartment building in Harlem, greeted by the homeless guy whose name I couldn't pronounce. I climbed the rickety staircase and opened the door to my apartment. There were two rooms, a bathroom and a bedroom. The bathroom was perpetually broken, the owners refusing to fix it and I simply couldn't afford it. I turned into my bedroom. It was like a time capsule that took me fifteen years back. There I was on the wall, shaking hands with Brezhnev, greeting Gorbachev, even performing

at a closed concert in the American embassy in front of George H. W. Bush. I was clean shaven, spotless, well-fed and care-free. Of course, that was fifteen years ago. Those days were just a pleasant memory, an old me in an old world. Whenever I walked in there, I truly felt like myself, nostalgia so strong it turned into a semi-reality.

The nostalgia brought back a feeling that I could not explain. It was as if a fire gnawed at my soul, my menial life a barrier of water. I wanted to soar among the muses, sing down from the clouds. I needed to show the world who I was, not a construction worker who spoke two words a day, but an artist who spoke the language of the world. Music. I went back outside and cleared my voice. I started singing. My voice took off, carrying to the corners of the world and back. I sang of my broken, god-forsaken life. I sang of the old and the new, the good and the bad, the then and now. Slowly people started coming outside to listen to the universal language. I saw Black, White, Asian, Indian, Middle Eastern and much more. None but a few understood my words, but they all understood my meaning. I had finally felt the spark of music. I achieved my ambition.

Jie, 19, North Broward Preparatory School



Eyes are of the Ember Kind

Nicole, 13, Regents International School Pattaya

Eternal inferno swaying to the beat of the fiery red,
He was a wildfire, untameable,
Burn the city lights and evergreen,
Engulfing the forest and this wood,
Tearing the roots bound to the earth,
Obsidian ashes of the fallen,
Corpses of the departed bathe in the hands of the flame,
Extinguished by the firefighters,
Now dreary hues stand placid upon the pale,
Yet daunting embers remained,
And his eyes are of the ember kind.

His thirst for power,
Dehydrated soul,
Led to receipts for three am liquor purchases,
And wine stained lips.
Envy pumping through his thick veins,
An insatiable hunger,
Submerged in fine luxuries,
Drunk off wine that tasted of greed,
Jealousy led to watery eyes and blurred vision,
Red rivers and red pills.
His eyes, still were of the ember kind.

On his wrist, scarlet stains in cursive,
Charcoaled fingertips,
Burning sensation in his throat,
Submerged his thin, blistered, ebony fingers
within the water,
Soothing all of his wicked, self-inflicted burns,
Wounds reflected in ripples,
He spat sympathies unholy,
But alas it is never enough,
This puddle is not enough for him, For it was not an ocean.
Nothing could quench the thirst that dries him out.

He is at the very top now, where he first wanted to be, He is
at the top of the building, His ambition pushed him off.
Just like the fire, his heart ablaze,
Just like the water, he falls,
Concrete floor and complexion now drained of colour,
His eyes remained of the ember kind...

Viktoria, 14, Regents International School Pattaya



A Lack of Imagination

Kaat, 14, The British School Warsaw

“You call this an *entertaining article*?!” Vehemently, my boss slammed down the pages crammed full of my neat writing on his desk. “I wouldn’t even call this an *article*!”

Great. I had spent days perfecting what was, apparently, not an article.

He was standing now, leaning over his desk, a snarl contorting his face, like a gnarled mask of the devil. I stayed seated, but twisted away from him, though unable to really escape. I felt like a mouse with its tail already in the cat’s paw; helpless and incapable of ever getting away.

Feeling like a mouse is one of the worst feelings in the world; it’s a large part of why I resent the little rodent so much. You feel as if someone is always setting a trap for you, or about to step on you.

Quickly I changed the image: I was no longer the mouse, but a piece of cheese. My boss was now the hated mouse, already holding me, ready to bite. I almost smiled at how comic it seemed, and drew it out on my lap with my finger.

Drawing was a nervous habit of mine.

Suddenly, he sighed and sagged back into his chair. “And you had so much potential, Walter. So much talent in writing. But that’s not all; you need more,” my boss muttered, more to himself than to me.

“I... I could fix it. I’ll take it home. Work all night if I have to. I swear, it will be perfect. Beyond that,” I said tentatively.

Smiling tiredly, he shook his head and told me I had had my chance. “I knew it was a big risk when I hired you. I thought you knew that. I thought you cared, Walter. Your writing is prodigious, but you just lack the imagination to work for a newspaper.”

All I could do was blink.

Then: “What do I do instead?”

Seemingly amused, he smiled. “That’s for you to decide. Just see it as a new adventure. Maybe you finally find some inspiration.” His smile grew into a wicked grin. “Goodbye Walter. You’re fired.”

I just couldn’t figure out why he was still smiling.

Probable he – the mouse – was thinking of how he was going to eat me – the poor cheese.

Really, how miserable must you be to compare yourself to *cheese*?

As if in a trance, I stood up, walked out of the office, out of the building, down the busy streets, all the way back home to my work table.

There, I slumped right back down in my chair.

And drew.

Paper after paper, going through pencil after pencil. Always the same thing: a mouse in the hideous red trousers and suspenders, a frown on his face. But it never looked right or completed.

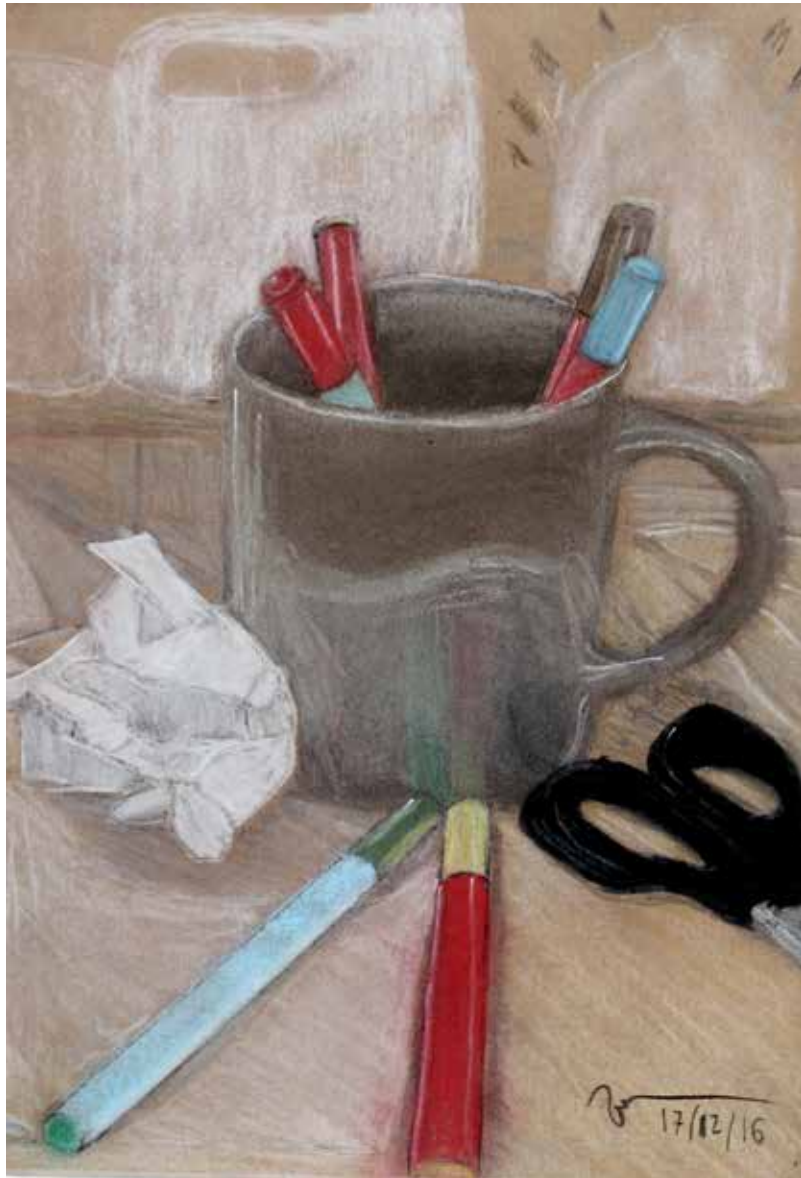
Until I drew him with that crazy grin. Then changed it, until it looked friendly and challenging.

“*Go find that adventure!*” it seemed to say.

And looking down at the mouse I knew I had found it.

The man who was fired from his dream job at a newspaper because of a lack of imagination was called Walter – Walt – Disney. He taught us not to give up when something doesn’t go according to plan, and that even fears (Disney was actually scared of mice!) aren’t always bad.

Martin, 15, The British International School Bratislava







Upper Secondary

Orange

Laurent, 17, International College Spain

Time to wake up. I open my eyes. Shadows, moving. Slowly shifting, writhing like dark snakes on a black beach, churning spectres of light. *Mom, turn on the light, I can't see a thing.*

Silence.

The light's on, Michael.

I sit bolt upright, looking around. Nothing. Nothing save for those cloudy apparitions in the dark, billowing figures of smoke. Blurred, fast, edgy. I try to swallow down my fear. I bring my fingers to my face, my eyes, clawing, frantic.

Michael?

I. I can't see.

My thoughts are racing. Racing fast. Faster than the car taking me to the hospital, faster than the beats of my caged heart, my breaths coming in short, shallow gasps. I can feel the buildings flashing by now, towering shadows of what my eyes once saw, obstacles in this deadly race for life. Shouts, sliding doors. Chloroform, breath mints, stainless steel trays, crisp scrubs. Clean. *We're here.*

What seems to be the problem ma'am? My. My boy. He can't see. Oh, but I can see. My eyes are lit with the blazing fire before me, the great funeral pyre of my ambitions. Tumbling down now, my vaulted aspirations, my faulty dreams. Amid the beeps, the shouts, the ragged breaths, the trolley wheels, I hear him say it. Ocular infarction. It is unlikely your son will ever see again. But Doctor — Oh the foolish boy who dreamed of Oxford. Are you sure?

Who dreamed of striped ties and fine accents. *I'm sorry ma'am.* What can I do now but watch my designs consume themselves in the cruel trick of a merciless trinity of fates. *There is little more we can do.* The fear, I can taste it: a synthetic ash on the tongue — the cremated remnants of a thousand colours I will never see again.

Then, hands. Desperate fingers clutching my arms hard to stop the tears from coming, pulling me this way and that in a futile, cosmic tug of war. Doors slam, and suddenly the silence is louder than a scream. They are afraid to let go. *Let's go.*

Am I Achilles, struck down in his fatal hour by an unseen blow? Macbeth, stepped in blood so far he cannot return? Oedipus, he who had everything, and then nothing. And yet to he who has nothing comes the joy of everything. The sound of popping corn, of roasting meat. The smell of a crackling fireplace, the taste of an orange gummy bear. Orange.

But what does that word mean to me anymore? A taste, a smell; maybe. What have I got left to hope for but the ecstasy of the everyday? Is my life reduced to an existence that does not see beyond a room, a sickbay, a treatment? To a world of canes and dotted language, maybe. But not to existence, I am sure of that. This bed will not be the sarcophagus or the box of pine that engulfs me, the symbol of my ultimate degradation. This is not my eleventh hour.

Gingerly, my feet bare, I step out onto the cold stone floor.

Judge's thoughts: This is such a clever take on the idea of ambition. While the family circle are concerned and frightened by disability the protagonist keeps pushing for the next step. "My thoughts are racing. Racing fast. Faster than the car taking me to the hospital" is such a great line. There's a lot going on with the main character switching between the present and past experiences and their own whirling thoughts and emotions, swinging between fears and determination.

I liked the reference to various ambitious characters from literature juxtaposed with the taste of orange gummy bears, although the 'roasting meat' and 'cracking fire' did sit a bit oddly with how modern the rest of the narrative was.

Ultimately, I applaud the author's engagement with the theme of ambition, the idea of an ambitious character facing disability and the challenges of creating an emotional and motivational story in a short space of time.

Yahya, 13, The British International School of Charlotte



Feminism

Mila, 16, La Côte International School Aubonne

Feminism:

What is the first thing that comes to mind?
 Man hate or even misandry?
 Supremacy or entitlement for women only?
 Aggressiveness?

Feminism is misinterpreted.
 It is not man hate.
 It is not the exaltation of women.
 Feminism is equality.

Job interview question for a woman:
 Do you want children?
 Yes.

She is not suitable for the job.
 She has no prospects for a career.
 She will never bring any good to the company.

Feminism is about political, economic and social rights for both genders.

Women are just as capable of working.
 Women are just as capable of being the boss.
 Women are just as capable of leading a team.

Job interview question for a man:
 Could you fire a good friend without feeling guilty?
 No.
 He will never become a boss.
 He is not man enough to work for the company.
 He is too sensitive to make decisions.

Feminism is also about man being able to be human.
 Not all men have to be aggressive to be manly.
 Not all men have to be fearless to be manly.
 They should have the right to be sensitive.
 They should be able to show their feelings.

*“And if you still hate the word,
 It is not the word that is important;
 It is the idea and the ambition behind it.”*

Emma Watson, UN Women Goodwill Ambassador

Judge’s thoughts: I love the fact that Mila took the word ambition and wrote a poem about feminism. I also like the way she begins with questions and hammers her point home with assertions. Most of all I appreciate the point she so clearly makes that gendered prejudice hurts everyone including men. This is clever thoughtful free verse and the use of “Yes” and “No” on single lines demonstrates the capability of the poet.

The one ragged point, ironically, is the final quotation. It makes you question if the words belong to the poet or to a community, I checked the citation and it looks valid but what I want in a poet is their own words, not something that has to be pinned down by someone else’s insight – however valid.

Fatimah, 12, Compass International School Doha, Madinat Khalifa



Judge's thoughts: *This piece is very strong conceptually, the arrangement of things that are considered "girly" and the statement of the colour theme makes this a very modern and brave piece of work.*

FEMINISM Copyright 2016 Fatimah Moors Year 7

Coin

Patricha, 14, St Andrews International School Bangkok

8, NEW YAR? YER?

GEGE GET YUAN FROM BABA TODAY. I WANT YUAN, BUT MAMA SAY I CLEAN SO I DON'T NEED YUAN. BABA SAY THAT GOWENMANT GIVE MONEY TO GEGE BUT I DON'T KNOW WHY GEGE GET YUAN. I WANT TO GO OUT BUT EVERYONE SAY NO AGAIN. I WANT TO GO OUT AND KNOW MORE ENGLISH LIKE GEGE, SO I CAN BE SMART LIKE. I WANT TO BE VERY LIKE GEGE. HE IS VERY SMART. GEGE IS VERY HAPPY THAT HE SMART. BUT RIGHT NOW, I VERY HAPPY THAT I CAN ENGLISH.

GEGE DON'T SMILE, BUT I KNOW HE VERY HAPPY BECAUSE HE KNOW SO MANY I DON'T, GEGE IS ALSO VERY NICE.

GEGE TALK TO ME SOMETIME. MAMA TALK TO ME WHEN SHE TELL ME TO CLEAN OR WHEN SHE TELL ME NOT TO LOOK OUTSIDE OR WHEN SHE TELL ME TO GO BASEMENT WHEN PEOPLE COME. I WANT TO MEET PEOPLE, BUT BABA DON'T LET ME MEET PEOPLE. I THINK I NOT SMART LIKE GEGE SO I CAN'T MEET PEOPLE. IF I SMART LIKE GEGE, I CAN GET TO MEET PEOPLE I THINK.

HAPPY NEW YER.?

8th of February 1995, Chinese New Year

I find it quite depressing to describe my feelings; desolated? The choices vary more when my parents handed me more money this morning. They looked me in the eyes, and I saw them, those expectations, they were higher than taping all the rulers ever created since the parturition of mankind together; the most adverse part

of this is that not one bit is exaggerated. Before I knew it, everything felt unnatural. English was the only language spoken to me. I only know the smallest bit of Chinese. Chinese was never spoken directly to me, my parents only speak Chinese to each other, and to my little sister who's someone that never existed. If an outsider ever sees her, we are done for. I wasn't aware at first, but I knew as I became an adult.

I was the biggest blessing they've ever received. They never had to pay for anything when it comes to raising me. This includes all the household necessities paid by the Government.

And now, I'm a future source of profit. Everybody had their souls shouting "doctorate degree". Soon enough, all of their words became something that pushed me deeper into anxiety, and all the disputes it brings along. I have never felt as wretched before because of knowing. The more I knew, the more things created to push me down, deep enough to make me feel numb as I listen to my parents' alter ego soar and aimed at my little sister. If I could alter and rewrite time, I would choose to become something else, even a toad at the side of the road would be better than being pushed into a hole your mind has created with ecological validity. Or even better, if I never existed at all.

Happy New Year.

Judge's thoughts: This is such an intelligent and well-constructed piece of text. I want to know if the author is aware of The Colour Purple because if she isn't she's managed to construct something very similar stylistically. It's powerful, ambitious, complex and challenging.

It's hard to judge short pieces of text and whenever I reread this one I have more questions about the characters and the environment. But I think that's a good thing.

Junyan, 18, Collège Champittet Pully



Don't Be Ambitious

Erik, 16, The British International School Bratislava

A few months ago I was asked what is my ambition, what do I want to do, hmmm, let's say in 10 years? And my answer was: "I would just love to have some waffles". Now, this was obviously a joke, but there was a drop of truth in it. For me waffles are a symbol of happiness. See, all I really want is to be happy. And I was told that it wasn't ambitious enough. What? Me being happy isn't ambitious enough? This got me thinking; why should I be ambitious? I went to the amazing place called the internet did some research and this, Ladies and Gentleman, is what I found.

Being ambitious is necessary for happiness, people who are not ambitious are: "dull, lazy, conformist, dependent, boring, and lethargic" And the whole point of life is to mean something. To achieve something.

No! Trust me on this, you really don't need to be ambitious to be happy, it does not make you dull, lazy, lethargic and definitely not boring. To be honest I really can't really tell you what the purpose of life is; but if it is to achieve something great, 90% of us are useless.

Now remember, there is difference between having an ambition and being ambitious. Your ambition can be to run a hotel, being ambitious would be to own a chain of luxury hotels and being on cover of *Forbes*. I have met a lot of people who were rich, and people who made it to the cover of *Forbes*; but the happiest person I ever met was Bohusko, from my dad's village. I have only met him twice, but I will remember him for the rest of my life

He was pushing his rusty cart uphill to get some firewood, as he did on daily basis. It was an annoying, monotonous

everyday task. But the way he was enjoying it was amazing: he was having his first bite from a waffle over and over again. Happiness was radiating from him; when he smiled at you, you could not resist and you just had to smile back. This was impossible to fake - not that he had a reason to. But Bohusko was not ambitious. He worked in a factory till his retirement. He never asked for a raise. He did not even get married or have a child. But still he managed to have those waffles.

Look, if you really think that having one billion dollars is going to make you happy, go ahead, but ask yourself why? If it is because of others, then I am sorry but "making it" won't make you happy, because you base your happiness on the thoughts of others. They will always see that your waffle isn't sweet enough. Someone will always think you haven't reached far enough, your wife is not hot enough, you are not rich enough. You should be the one controlling your happiness. Because that's the only thing you can control.

I am not saying you should spend your whole life, living off government pay cheques, but do what makes YOU happy and don't be afraid of what others think about it, because their thoughts are only as powerful as you allow them to be.

Don't be ambitious; be you.

Judge's thoughts: This is a great piece of confrontational journalism, challenging an assumption and inviting response from the reader.

I'm less convinced by the story of the "happy peasant" Bohusko as a counter to ambition. Because this is something the author has observed we can't know the truth of Bohusko's life and whether he has regrets in life.

The idea that ambition should focus on personal happiness is appealing but the author is still very young with hopefully many long years ahead of them. I'd be interested to know if they still feel the same way in twenty years time.

Jiahao, 15, The British International School Bratislava



Hopeful

Emilie, 14, The British International School of Charlotte

There's three absolutely breathtaking things about concerts. The first one is that moment when the artist enters the stage. Everyone is talking and then when the curtains go up, the quiet conversations turn into loud screaming from the top of lungs, and you can't even hear your own thoughts. That's when your stomach does a twist and nothing really seems to matter, other than the people on that stage.

The second one is when the band plays a slow song, and everyone lifts their phones or lighters and waves them over their heads and it looks just a little bit like the night sky has fallen down into the venue.

Lastly, there's that part where the band is playing a well-known song and the singer stops singing and holds the microphone out for the audience to continue the song. And when they do, it's like every voice blends together and fills up the venue, like thousands of drops to fill up a lake, and you can see the smile on the singers face because everyone knows their song. The amazing thing is, everyone sings that song for different reasons. There's a thousand voices, and a thousand disparate passions within those voices.

I wanted all that. I wanted to smile as the crowd screamed my lyrics back to me. I wanted to someday be able to look out at an audience and think "I made it". And I was so hopelessly hopeful it would happen.

I'd liked music since I was a kid. In fact, my love for music started when I was seven years old. I remember the exact moment I heard my favorite song for the first time. It was like I was all alone with that song, I felt like the entire

world around me vanished and became galaxies and words, written all over the metaphorical walls that song had created. It was like I was somewhere else, somewhere stunning, with colors and melodies that would forever remain stuck inside my head, like they were glued to my memory. I'd liked the way it could both make me forget everything and remember everything, the way it could make me feel all these different things at once. There was something quite magical about the whole process.

I wanted to be able to do that, change people. Save them. I wanted to write lyrics that said things that people couldn't say themselves, the songs they would play when they couldn't deal with how they felt at 3:00 at night, when it would be so quiet they couldn't drown out their thoughts. I wanted to write the songs that people loved so much they wanted the lyrics tattooed all over their body, and the melodies consistently playing in their ears.

When I was younger, I wanted to be a doctor, because I wanted to help people. But I realized that the best way to help people — without having to look at their insides, and possibly get sick in the process — was to write music for them. To piece together words and sentences, and transform this poetry into a melodic miracle that said all the words these people couldn't get past their lips themselves. I wanted that. More than anything.

Judge's thoughts: This was a beautifully emotive piece of prose: very real, very true and very accessible. The language is lyrical without being fanciful and the narrator has a powerful and ambitious voice. I especially enjoyed this passage:

"I wanted to write lyrics that said things that people couldn't say themselves, the songs they would play when they couldn't deal with how they felt at 3:00 at night, when it would be so quiet they couldn't drown out their thoughts. I wanted to write the songs that people loved so much they wanted the lyrics tattooed all over their body...."

This is great stuff but as it currently stands it's more prose poem than short story. It doesn't have a linear narrative or a conclusion. I think this could be an excellent beginning to a longer story or novella.

Francesca, 18, The British International School Bratislava



Judge's thoughts: *This is an utterly incredible piece of artwork and the artist has clear talent and understanding of colour and line.*

The Truth About Ambition

Ryan, 15, The British School of Guangzhou

Ambition is only an illusion
We will never say
“We succeed because of motivation”
The truth is that
“Perseverance is the key”
is a sad lie, and
“Only wealth can fulfill your dreams”
In 10 years time I’ll tell my friends
They are not useful for the future
My worries will know that
I am self-conscious because
Security
Is more important than
Education
I can assure you
Everyday
People dream to become special
But this is not true for my generation
“This is a fixed-minded society”
Specialists say
Twenty years from now we will be poor
and homeless by statistics
I do not concede that
I will have a future of my making
When the time comes
We will all succumb to our defeats and weaknesses
It can’t be said that

I believe in others and myself
Though it is true that
We are becoming more hopeless as we progress
It is foolish to presume that
There is a chance for everyone
Our generation is the worst in human history
You can’t convince me that
There is innovation in everyone
Because the thing is
The world is a rotting place
Even though
Some dreams are accomplished at times
Science and the arts won’t last
And it’s arrogant to say
We can do better through our efforts
All of this is true unless it is undone
(Now read from bottom to top)



Alessandra, 16, International College Spain



Wasp Ambitious

William, 16, The British School Warsaw

Eric lay peacefully in bed one night and pondered the idea of 'beeing ambitious'.

"Why beeing?" he thought sadly, "I wish I could be a bee, to bee ambitious, and not just a mere wasp, destined to do nothing but annoy people on their picnics."

Eric the parasitoid wasp was tired of relying on others before pupating, he dreamt about the life of a bee, buzzing amongst the flowers, making honey, and not relying on a host to aid him in his larval stage. Eric sat with his many siblings in a leaf beetle, slowly sitting around gorging on the still-living flesh whilst being moved from leaf to leaf, being terribly bored, and wanting to see the world.

One day, Eric's host beetle crawled onto a branch over a bee hive. Eric could see through the translucent flesh and skin, and down below through to the nest; this was his chance! Eric began to burrow through the internal organs of the beetle, and pass through the outer layer of a faecal shield before reaching the fresh outdoor air. Despite not being ready to pupate, Eric dragged his white, writhing body through the beetle, and fell onto the leaf below and down into the hive.

The walls were coated in a mysterious sticky, golden substance, and a buzzing sound emanated through the hollow pathways. A fear gripped him, but Eric longed to fulfil his ambition and be accepted as a bee. Further down the passageway, a pair of black tendrils groped the air ahead, and a bee's head appeared, covered in yellow hair, and tiny pollen grains, followed by two huge, black, compound eyes. The wings buzzed overhead and nearly

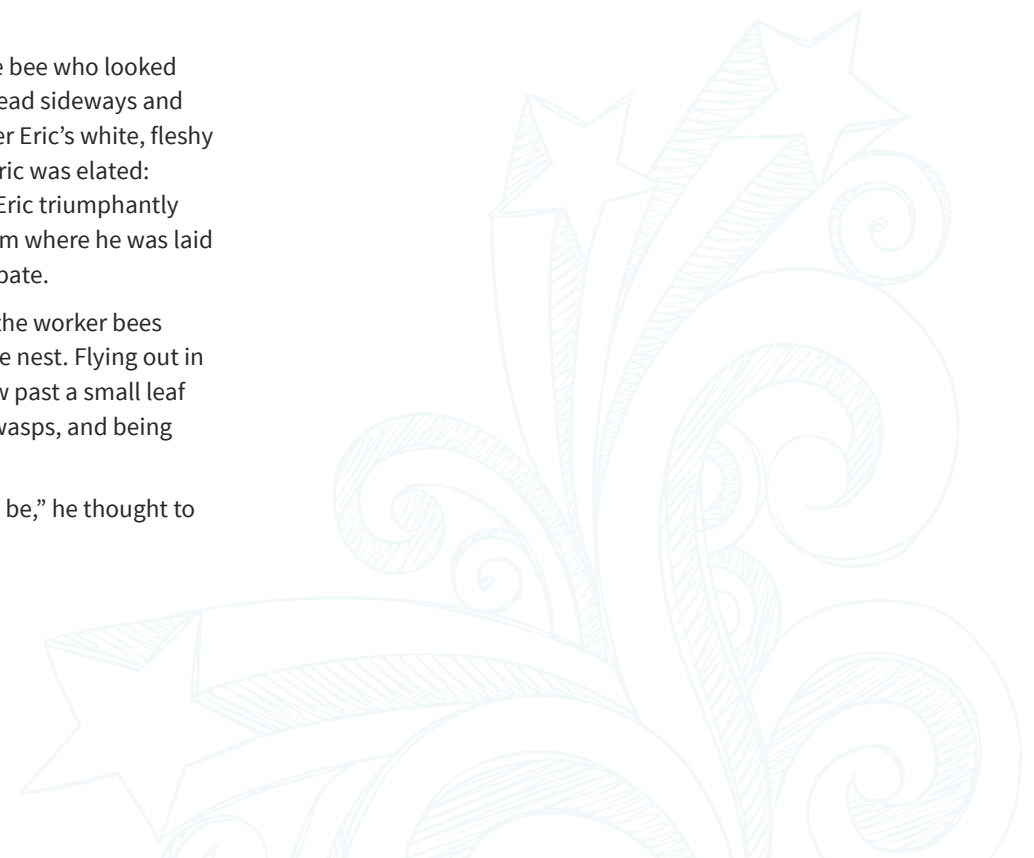
blew Eric out of the hive, but he hung on and crawled forth. Despite it being biologically impossible, Eric believed in himself, and communicated with the bee.

"Oh great bee," he cried, "I have heard much and travelled far. Tales of the unparalleled ambition of the mighty race of the bees has spread even to lowly parasitoid wasps stuck in the drab bodies of leaf beetles. Please, accept me as one of your kind; I can bee ambitious, like a true bee, and fly with you."

Eric lay there begging at the feet of the bee who looked on, emotionlessly. The bee tilted his head sideways and dropped a shower of yellow pollen over Eric's white, fleshy body, and buzzed a message across. Eric was elated: the bee had said yes! The bee carried Eric triumphantly through the maze of corridors to a room where he was laid with the bee larvae and allowed to pupate.

A few days later he did so, and joined the worker bees collecting pollen, and flying around the nest. Flying out in the fresh air and under the sun, he flew past a small leaf beetle sitting in agony parasitized by wasps, and being eaten from the inside out.

"You can be anything that you want to be," he thought to himself happily, "even a bee!"



Amanda, 17, North Broward Preparatory School



Be Ambitious

Pauline, 15, Collège Champittet Pully

People often refer to me as an ambitious teenager! I regularly then ask myself the question, what do they mean with this? How is this different than not being ambitious? How do they see the difference?

When I reflect on myself, I moved a lot with my family to different countries and each time I needed to adapt myself and get used to a new environment and friends. That made me also very humble and open to learn and understand other cultures and visions, but I always needed to make a lot of effort for getting the attention from people and make myself valued in their eyes. I must say that I am in the meantime pretty good at this and this gave me confidence in approaching people with who I am and who I want to be in this new country. This confidence helped me in increasing my personal objectives with friends at home, at school, with the family and also in sports.

This is why I think people see me as ambitious, I am quite confident in myself and I try to encourage to set myself high targets to achieve in all different kind of activities. That makes me feel good especially when I achieve these objectives then. An example is when I came the first time to Switzerland, I was 8 years old and I couldn't speak any French. The teacher told me that it would take me 1 year to be able to follow the standard programme and in the end I could already integrate the standard class after Christmas. I somehow had a feeling that it was easy to do this and this helped me in setting higher targets for myself and being comfortable to achieve them. For me personally I see this more as a game towards myself that I love to play! When

I am not reaching my target, I kind of lost the game, but I learned from it so that next time when new target will need to be set, I will be more cautious as I understood now where my boundaries are... So this makes me feel comfortable to set new objectives and play a new game. I believe that all will call this ambitious.

This personal experience and attitude has helped me a lot in my sport activity. I am currently part of the Swiss Olympic Talent Team for horse riding. People tell me that I achieved this because I wanted to achieve this as I am ambitious, but for me this is just part of my daily attitude in proving that I am doing things the best I can and try to show others that I have some talents that they have not yet seen as they don't know me yet well enough. When I started at 8 years old with my first pony Cascade, I really wanted to jump with this pony and to win a medal in the local competition. After the first medal, came a second, a third, then a bigger pony, I won bigger competitions and now I am part of the Swiss Olympic Team. I love playing that game and surprising everybody with what I can!

Some will say it is definitely too ambitious to be present as athlete at the Olympic Games, others will think that I should have this as objective in order to be ambitious.

Ina, 15, Collège Champittet Pully



Learning to Surf

Sophie, 16, British International School of Chicago, South Loop

They've seen slick white-bellied beasts with rows of angled teeth squished into cherry-colored gums; their fins peeking from the water to raise plastic kayaks to the clouds. I was learning to surf that day with my cousin. The limp kelp intertwined to form a slimy gate, guarding the surfers from the ghostly imprints of a shark's bite.

I remember staying up late watching surfer movies with the volume on a whisper, as I tried to blink away sleep and wipe my eyes with buttery popcorn hands. The surfers spent their summer days in snug, glossy water that reflected the colors of their bathing suits.

With my wet suit on, I was determined to paddle to the break zone and catch my first wave. I gallantly stomped both heels into the pacific water, turning a blind eye to the clawing of the ice under my toes. I balanced the long-board on my head like a weighted crown that swayed me back and forth. As I waded in the water, I could feel the wet suit hugging my skin, desperate for warmth.

When the first wave unfurled, I didn't paddle enough to overthrow the crest. My face met the smooth arc, which spun me to the floor, warping and squeezing me; I was pulled along with the board. Salt water pushed its way into my nose and sand nestled in my hair.

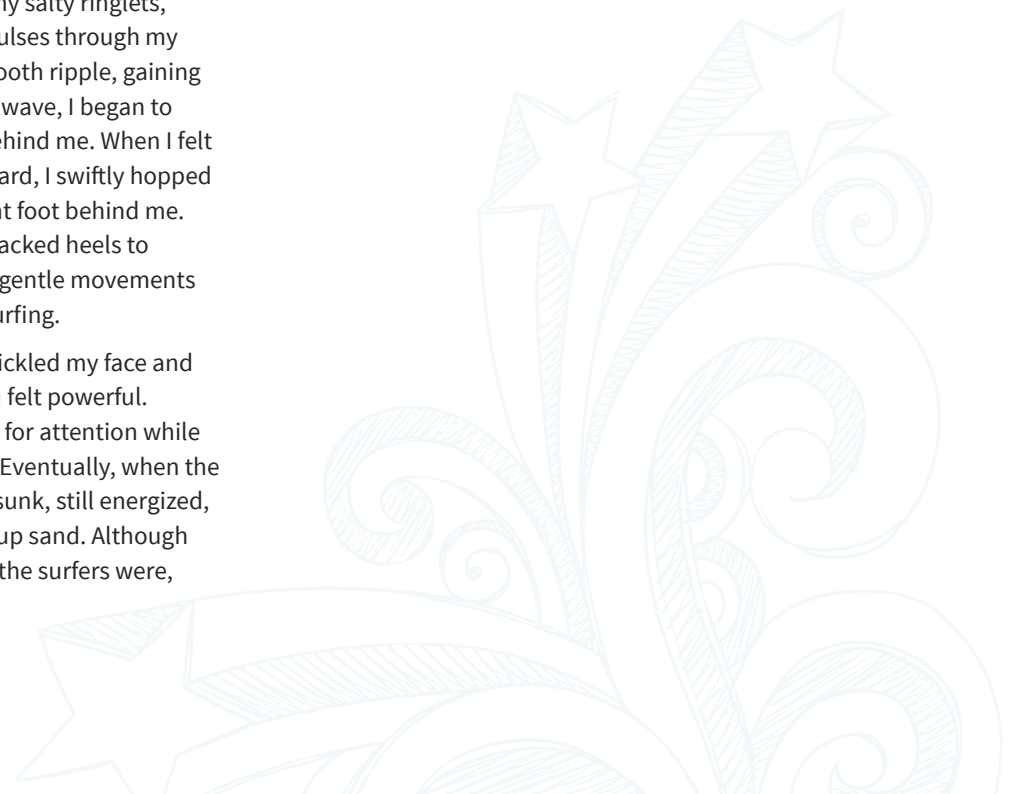
With each wave, I learned to push my toes from the sand bed, while the frigid water would prod me towards the shore. With my belly on the board, I mastered how to propel myself, punching my forearms into the water, sending little sprays onto my cheeks. I loved the tone, how each stroke sounded like a thick pebble dropping

into a yawning pond. When a wave was nearing, I arched my back and straightened my forearms to prevent it from swallowing me again.

I finally reached where the waves surfaced: an unruffled sliver of water. The air carried the clean scent of sequoias that speckled the far mountains. I could not leave the water. The gazing sun was near the horizon, outlining the strung cirrus clouds with gold paint.

As I perched on the board with my legs draping off the sides, a slight gust of wind animated my salty ringlets, sending a quiver down my back and pulses through my legs. The calm water curved into a smooth ripple, gaining strength. As soon as I saw the forming wave, I began to paddle, violently pushing the water behind me. When I felt the power of the wave beneath the board, I swiftly hopped up in a single advance, leaving my right foot behind me. I slightly shifted my weight from my cracked heels to nimble toes, caressing the board with gentle movements as I drove left and right. I was finally surfing.

I felt sheer elation; the swirls of wind tickled my face and carried the rich earthy smells of bark. I felt powerful. The salty sprays tried to grasp my skin for attention while seaweed floated limp in my direction. Eventually, when the wave's blue lips curled and crashed, I sunk, still energized, into the snug pearly foam that kicked up sand. Although I wasn't propelled by a tidal wave like the surfers were, I felt phenomenal.



Fan, 14, British International School of Houston



The Power of Ambition

Nadine, 15, Regents International School Pattaya

Power. All you could ever want would be within your reach if you had power. But what exactly is power? Strength? Wealth? We all have different desires and different views. I do want power, not at all; I need it. I need power in order to survive; the weak have no place in our world. When King Duplen announced that his heir would be decided in battle, I knew that this was my chance. I would be the one to rule this appalling kingdom. I would be the one who brings glory to our land. The weak have no place in this world, my world.

Freedom. The chains that bound me shall be no more. They mock and ridicule me, say that my very existence is worthless. I can show them and I will show them. The King's announcement had brought a wave of excitement and fear. Modesty is of no use to me for my humility is wasted on these discourteous noblemen. I know that I can win and I know that I must win. I will bring equality and peace to our land while I have this chance. I'll show those aristocrats the truth; they are unaware that the shackles that trap them are far worse than mine.

On the 5th of December the first battle had begun. The kingdom was bustling with excitement. All were eager to see who would be crowned king. Men from across the kingdom came to compete, each with their own desires.

Simple. This was no competition. No one will ever defeat me. I had passed the first battle swiftly and was observing the remaining contestants. A peculiar young man had begun fighting. His eyes were savage, his hair filthy. Through the gaping hole in his rags I could see mortifying

scars. He will not last. He is weak, as all slaves are, and would be unfit to rule. Just the thought of being controlled by one of those mutts is sickening. How can a man that is incapable of thinking for himself rule us?

Ignorant. The nobles surrounding me were utter fools. Their judgmental gazes only strengthened my resolve. I was next to battle and as I was walking to the stadium, I noticed a noble looking at me with disgust in his eyes. He knows nothing, nothing of my pain. All those pampered fools, blinded by money, will pay. I will get my revenge and show them that we are all equals. Money is not what makes us powerful, as it is sheer willpower that decides your worth.

Aspiration. I had a strong desire to be King; I believed that no one else deserved the power and responsibility. Had my excessive pride fooled me? With such impure objectives could I truly say I was fit to rule? I had never expected such an anarchic outcome.

Ambition. I believed that the throne was rightfully mine. Was I blinded by revenge when all I had been striving for was equality? Had my determination and hard work all been in vain? I presumed that ambition could lead me to greatness, yet it seems that my unjust goals have led to chaos.

Batti, 9, Compass International School Doha, Rayyan



Where are we now?

Charlotte, 14, The English International School Prague

Seven A.M. It begins. Like every morning the alarm goes off. My clothes are draped over a pale green chair, bleached slowly by the sun. There are no more vivid and clear colours like there used to be. Only the remnants of what once was: nothing new, nothing growing, no change, nothing. I am outside the house and at the bus stop. Everything is the same again. The bus is never late. I wish it would be, just once, just one minute late, for a change just anything out of the ordinary, something new, something different.

I stand for the whole journey. It is usually quite a long one but I want to avoid looking at the propaganda plastered on every seat. The posters display, in black and white, several slogans in an unfittingly happy tone: "Remember a rested worker is a happy worker" and "Don't forget: every worker is important to us! You are important to us!". They also feature a smiling family and their dog going about their daily life. There are several other posters all showing the family doing some tedious task. You rarely can see any one smiling any more, no one knows why, but we just stopped.

Come to think of it, no one cries any more either. There is no laughter or tears. You won't hear the occasional rant from a neighbour's open window, nor the jealous whining of a small child, the city is always in silence.

I look around the bus hoping to catch someone's eye. I want to speak, I have to speak. No one else will, so I have to. They all just want to work and go home, work and go home, the same thing, every day over and over, day after day, month after month, year after year, until nothing, until

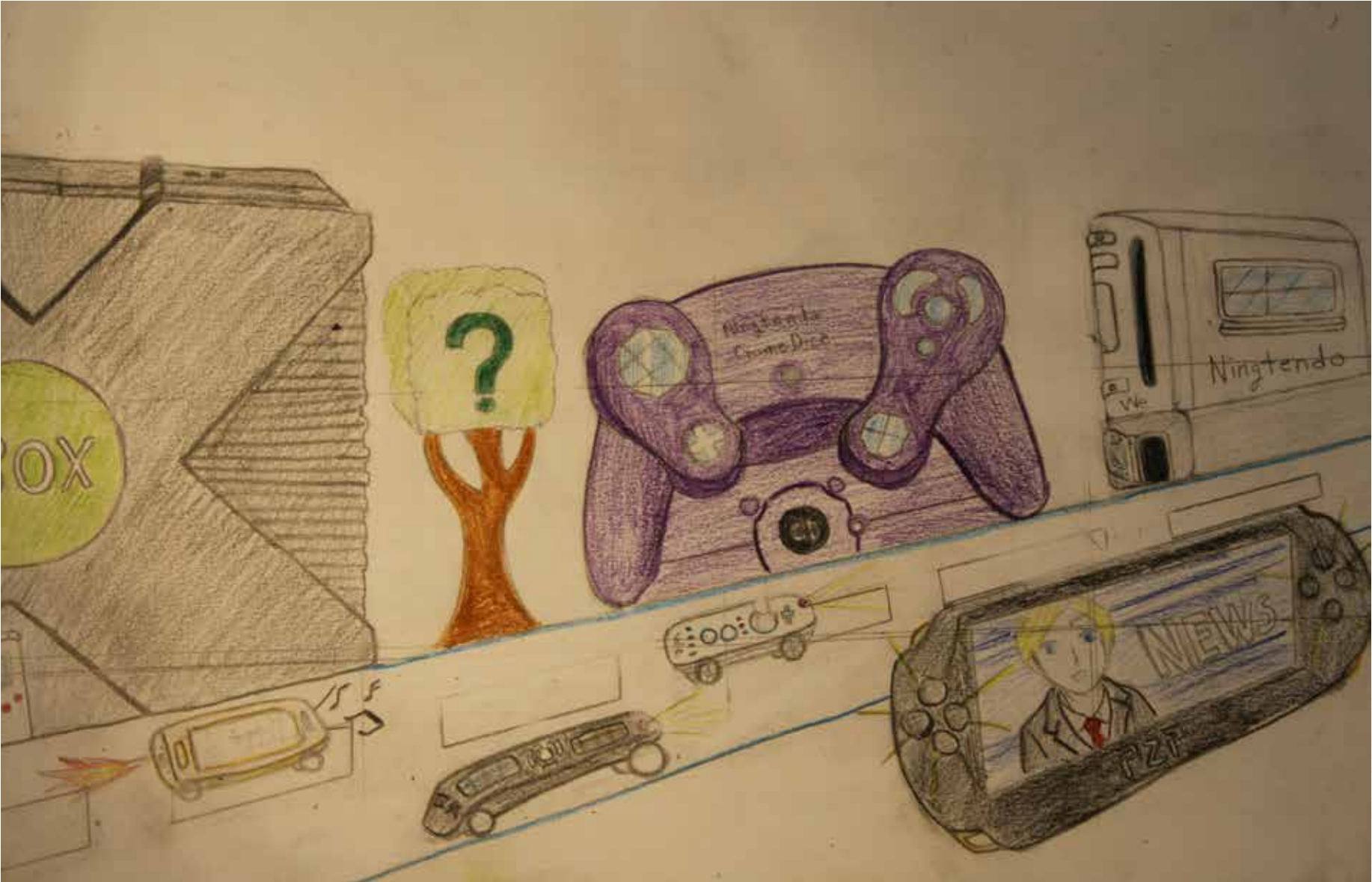
the world just ends from nothing. I have to speak. The constant droning of the bus is driving me insane; there has to be another sound that can cover it up. I cough. It echoes into the bus; it chimes around the steel bars and bounces off the windows. Everyone hears it but no-one says anything. They stare forward but it's clear that they heard. The breathing in the bus is becoming erratic and people are starting to shift in their seats as if they are waking up for the first time in years. We are all feeling the change.

I once saw a parade with street performers, jumping up and down, colours seemingly bouncing off them as they played a simple tune. I now hum that familiar tune, first in my head, and then, my lips part and I sing into the emptiness.

Someone once said to me: "You must always remember, when all the people have forgotten you must dare to speak out and remind them. Remind them of what it is to live and change. Remind them of what it is to live. Remind them of their dreams long ago, remind them of their ambitions"

And now this memory returned, I remembered because I had heard that tune so very long ago. Today I dared to dream of a world where everyone always dreamed and that tune, so unimportant but so significant, taught them what it is to dream again.

Jeongmook, 14, International College Spain



Odette

Emilia, 15, Dover Court International School Singapore

The silence deepens and deepens in anticipation as the audience awaits. I stand behind the curtains as I inhale deeply with my eyes closed. All I can hear is the pounding of my heart as my mind starts to travel through my memories. Slowly. Slowly drifting away to the very beginning.

It was my 7th birthday. My mum told me she had a surprise. She slowly put her hand into her pocket and took out two tickets that said “Swan Lake”. It was my very first ballet performance. The dancer moved across the stage like a feather with such fragility and grace, wearing the purest white dress. I watched her in awe as she danced with the prince in a gentle manner. She was a pure captivation. My heart started to tingle as I slowly fell in love...

“En Pointe Ballet Academy.” I jumped in joy when my mum brought me there for my very first ballet class. As I received a pair of ballet shoes, I expressed my unutterable joy with a broad grin that stayed on my face for the whole day. I came out from my very first class with eyes that glowed passionately with delight...

“Plie, Tendu, Ronde de Jambe...” Every class was a mixture of sweat and pain, but I loved the satisfaction that came within, as my muscles and bones matured. I had my very first ballet recital on Christmas Eve. I carefully danced across the stage with butterflies in my stomach as my mum beamed with pride from the stands...

I had to jump higher, stretch longer and move lighter day by day. Every practice was tensed with pressure as eager

dancers strived for the same goal. My mind often lost its focus to girls who spun and leaped with much greater ease. A class that used to lighten up my mind with exhilaration became an intense battle with my limits. Teacher yelled, “Again!” as every part of my body ached and begged for rest, but I carried on with sweats and tears...

I quietly sobbed in great disappointment of failure and my body trembled as all of my agonizing effort futilely dispersed into thin air. But mum sat beside me, drawing me into her arms as she gently whispered the words of consolation, like a lullaby...

I tightened the ribbons of my pointe shoes with a new striking determination. I got to my feet and started to trip and twirl around the room in ecstasy. Mum was watching me from a distance with tears of joy as I danced and danced...

The music starts. My body flinches. I gently trot to the stage. I start to move to the soothing melody, slowly spinning with ease and gracefully spreading my arms in the air like wings. My heart starts to ache as the huge hall, full of people feel so empty without her. It will always be empty because she will never be here anymore. But I can feel her mellow presence hovering over me as I dance, giving a tender touch to every move and making it more subtle and gentle... Bittersweet tears well up in my lustful eyes as I come to a realisation that for the first time in my life, every move I made was tinged with true exquisiteness.

Grace, 12, La Côte International School Aubonne



The Flight of The Flora

Danyal , 15, Léman International School, Chengdu

“Why are they flying away, mother?” I asked her. She bent to the wind’s will so smoothly that she seemed to be close to taking flight herself. Her red petals were covered in specks of blue and white, while her beautiful center showed simplicity that had its own meaning.

“They are the ones who sacrifice themselves” she told me. “They are those whose petals are infected by pesticide and they harbor deadly infections given to us by humans.”

“So they are leaving to protect us?”

My mother’s yellow leaf, attached to the lower half of her stem, fluttered. This told me that the situation was as I had described it.

“Where do they go?”

“Wherever the wind takes them.”

I looked at her form change from tall to timid, as if she had a feeling that could not have been contained in the amount of words she was allowed by God.

My mother whispered. “Only one hundred words left for the month, dear. Keep quiet.”

I faced away from her, wondering on my own. I had the gift of thought, my best ally. The other flowers also had their own gifts. My mother had the greatest: “Kindness”.

Her warmth could substitute the sun on a cloudy day, and could make me feel as though the sky was blue again....

Now that our patch was growing small, her warmth was fading. She switched anticipating the best for fearing the worst.

I saw to the left a yellow tulip beginning to lift off the ground. The one behind it seemed to lean, almost as to try and touch it, but before it could, the tulip flew away, leaving only a trail of light black toxin. I knew it was a girl, as it was yellow, a primary color.

I saw it turn into a speck as it rode the winds towards the Northern part of Iceland.

I want to join her, I told myself. I want to fly without disease and without the fear of death. I want to fly instead with the anticipation for a better life. My mother could make any dreams come true. All I had to do was persuade. But I had only three words left.

How could I tell my mother that I wanted to fly?

My father had been taken by the wind many years ago. He could read the movements of petals to see what someone wanted. But he wasn’t there anymore, and I had to use my words.

“Mother” I said.

She looked to me, her petals standing straight up.

What words do I use? My mother waited and waited, trying not to use any words. Her stare burned through me as I decided my last two words for the month.

And my last two words to her.

She had cared for me for so long, and actually had tried before to let me escape the patch. But I had to persuade her in two words.

“To father” I said.

She asked a gust of wind to arrive. The flowers bowed as it passed over their heads and to me, and I marveled at its majestic movements.

“Be safe.”

The wind caught me.

“Be happy.”

The wind lifted me.

“Don’t forget me.”

A drop escaped my leaf and landed on my mother.

“Live, child.”

Alicia, 15, International College Spain



Distress

Benjamin, 15, Compass International School Doha, Madinat Khalifa

Distress. They came armed with their voices, sharp as knives and like the winds of winter, seeking nothing, but misery of the exposed. People say, “Hate is a broken man’s tool”, but I have seen it differently...

Just for the record, the enlightening part about friends is that you always tend to need them even if you don’t feel like you do. In my case, I was desperate, and she showed up like a hearth in blizzard, melting all the frost knives aimed at my soul.

The gloomy winter morning rose with the prospect of yet another day. Its pale light flooded my room, giving presence to ghosts. As I lay there, drifting between the hell of my dreams and nightmare of my world, a thought passed: what if things were different?

Life as an African-American, in the 1950s, was unknown; none knew how it felt. My body was a torment for my soul. The dull day reflected on the surroundings: the trees stood barren, the grass withered and not even the birds cared to witness my sufferings. I excruciatingly commenced the walk to the shop. I felt dead; my heart was faint drum inside; perhaps the only thing that still had the will to go on. The howling wind coolly embraced me and it was

welcomed. My legs moved by routine. As I gradually progressed down the abandoned street, I spotted a winter jasmine. Its radiant yellow colour comforted the moribund grass around it. Soon enough, the beautiful bloom would fade as well.

Unanticipatedly, the broken men came. I felt a sudden instinct to run, but I couldn’t move. I froze like a deer in headlights. They approached. Fear. They came nearer, their eyes stabbing at me. One corrupted soul pushed me with brute force. My body slammed on the winter-hardened ground and somewhere inside something snapped. The second, aimed at my ribs with a brutal kick, breaking several ribs and probably puncturing a lung. All the air, in my body, seized this opportunity and deserted my perishing body with eagerness.

As my eyes were closing and the light faded. Everything blazed and a character emerged. The person was a stranger to me, yet somehow she seemed familiar like a person you have been anticipating, but never noticed. Her eyes were pools of ocean blue, but her hair roared with a fierce, fiery, flame red. The frozen soul of my assaulters melted and vaporized into nothing, and they left with wind.

Relieved. I felt a gradual cessation of pain settling over my subjugated body. The girl walked towards me; her steps eased the dying world around her. She lay down next to me, her innocent eyes stared away in the distance, and her body emanated a cosy warmth and when I tried to talk, she simply put a finger across my lips and said “Everything will be fine”, so I went to sleep with her voice echoing through my dreams.

So that was my story, I wanted a friend, a companion for life and my wish was granted. However, my life will remain a challenge impossible to overcome, but I have impetus to overcome what fate decrees. Lastly, I think I rephrase the saying “Hate is a broken man’s tool” to “Hate is a broken man’s only companion”.



Yukiha, 18, Northbridge International School Cambodia



Concupiscence

Carlee, 17, North Broward Preparatory School

At the end of the tunnel there is a light;
A red that shines just dim enough to see.
The whisper of your regrets
Echoes off the walls,
Bouncing back into your conscious.
Yet, we move closer and closer.
Is it our desires that drag us towards our doom?
That growing ache for something more?
A pulse deep within our shadows;
That moves us closer and closer.
The tunnel seems to get longer,
Expanding with each horrid memory
That flashes before our vision.
Until we start running—
Hoping that if we just get close enough
We won't feel so terribly lonely.
Too soon the red light fades
Our time within is done
That horrible darkness surrounds us.
And yet, we move closer and closer.



Huzair, 16, The British School Warsaw





NORD
ANGLIA
EDUCATION

Be Ambitious

Central Office Address

Nord Anglia Education, St George's Building
Level 12, 2 Ice House Street, Central, Hong Kong

www.nordangliaeducation.com

Education Team

Nord Anglia Education, 115K Olympic Avenue
Milton Park, Oxford. OX14 4SA. UK